

J. M. Winter is a Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and the author of *The Great War and the British People*, which was published earlier this year.

quality. The roots of both are in the old Puritan soil of the East Midlands . . . . Both of them, early in life, found themselves obliged to abandon their inherited creeds, to which, none the less, both always looked back with respect and even affection . . . . With . . . brevity and self-restraint Hale White paints his picture of small Non-conformity, of Calvinism in deep and Presbyterianism run down with Unitarianism. It was a gruesome world, and one which had been very hard on the young candidate for the ministry: his expulsion is one of the meanest episodes in the history of religious persecution . . . . No one will claim for Hale White a commanding position in literature. But there will always be some who will be drawn to him by the silver-point of his style, and a genius, not very fertile or energetic, but steady, penetrating, fine, at rest, in a world of which it found three-fourths unintelligible and the remainder only just tolerable, in a kind of Calvinistic Quietism of its own devising.

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#### Cover picture

"Old Woman Cooking"; one of Velázquez's "kitchen pictures". It is in the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Scotland and reproduced here from the book reviewed on page 831.

## Images of human separateness

### Lawrence Gowing

JONATHAN BROWN  
Velázquez: Painter and courtier  
321 pp. Yale University Press. £35.  
0300034660  
JONATHAN BROWN and J. H. ELLIOTT  
A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the  
court of Philip IV  
296 pp. Yale University Press. Paperback,  
£9.95.  
0300036213

The painters whose passionate early moment achieves in maturity a serene sublimation discover the most mysterious harmonies in art. Name more so than Velázquez. In place of style, as it was taught and learned before and after him, and the qualities that Baroque courts ordained for themselves, he made himself a connoisseur—a philosopher perhaps, but of his thought we know nothing—of the visual appearance of distinction.

For him design might never have existed. He rarely drew; Jonathan Brown, who has written a very substantial study of him, is convinced by only two surviving sheets. For Velázquez art consisted in painting from life and hardly anything else. In place of the graphic formulations which had sustained painting from the beginning, he accepted, it seems by instinct, that the matter of the art, the values and the hues of pigment, were of their nature amorphous and, with an assurance of which there was no sign in the tradition or the milieu, set about matching them to vision. Where did the schema come from, which allowed such original observation and courtly tact? Historians now react to such questions as if the philosophical consensus let them off the hook.

Brown's answer to the problem of where Sevillian realism came from is negative rather than helpful: "not from Caravaggio", and if we expect a pattern for the style he is surely right. But is it likely that Caravaggio's defiant insistence on painting only from the model, which was the talk of sophisticated studios everywhere, was not debated in the theoretically well-briefed studio of Velázquez's master Pacheco? Brown gives little idea of the intensity with which young painters in the second decade of the century felt bodily presence, an intensity that progressively replaced, in Seville as much as anywhere, the formulae of the Counter-Reformation styles. Writers at the moment are ill-served by the tenor of Caravaggio studies, which like to think of their cynical, brilliant hero as a pious exponent of the Mannerist reform, and Brown is further handicapped by deference to an unpublished work on Velázquez's kitchen-pictures by Barry Wind, which is to show that they are *picture* *ridiculous* or moralizing farces. I will believe this demonstration when I see it.

The inherent force of the early work is missing from Brown's view. He seems to have no idea how exceptional the kitchen-pictures are in the whole of art. There is nothing essentially comparable to Velázquez's sense of the urgent reality of common life. Brown seeks—not quite successfully—to define this alternative to idealization: "in some way which we may never be able to grasp he imagined another approach, a way which would capture the spontaneity and immediacy of the act of seeing." Rather than spontaneity, Velázquez seems to have felt a quality of human presence which could be patiently matched in paint just as still-life was matched. Brown assumes a quality that can be comprehensively labelled "mastery as a painter"; he has in mind the "impressive ability to reproduce light, colour and texture". I find on the contrary that the display of virtu was just what was conspicuously and increasingly absent. Shape and texture were rendered with more and more lofty detachment. The lack of graphic warmth and the disdain for description in the mature work were not always admired; Cassiano dal Pozzo, the Roman connoisseur, found the style melancholy and severe. Debating the nature of this accomplishment we still hardly know what we are talking about. Brown perceptively observes that from the beginning Velázquez failed to learn the elementary conceptual skills of spatial perspective and that by leading him to tonal expedients in their place this lacuna was ultimately to his advantage and a positive

condition of his originality.

Moreover the kitchen-pictures struck an odd vein of characterization. Most of the models appeared more than once and though there is no suggestion of a free-living coterie such as surrounded the young Caravaggio it does appear that amenable models once recruited were not readily relinquished. Frozen merriment shaded into introspection. The men at table, the kitchen-maid, even the rugged water-carrier and the boy he serves, all seem turned inward, occupied within themselves. The myth of farcical moralizing apart, there was nothing to vex them except an isolated brooding that seems to have been thought of as inseparable from the common condition. Without a sense of this depth in the kitchen-pictures we shall miss the tension in the reserved presences which populated the art of Velázquez's maturity.

then called 'el teatro de la grandeza'... where in time he would become a principal player". remains elusive because if fine quality was lacking from what Velázquez had been painting in Seville, it was genuine. Is it possible that the early pictures had in the painted and then lived to be abandoned because a sought-after definition was eluding this reserved, highly literate, exigent youth—some inaudible secret of life, exchanged at close quarters in the noisome female dominion of the kitchen? No other painter leads us to fantasize thus. It is rather how we imagine the adolescence of novelists. The intuition that the tradition and the method of still-life might yield a genre-like reference to common life and the consequent discovery that this might lead the way to a far from common new order of portraiture were more akin to the kinds of awareness that opened before *littérateurs* in the nineteenth century; of course the

ideal this body looks to me quite in dividual and specific. Is Mars really expressing chagrin at being caught in the net? Surely not. I can see awareness of the inelegance of being made to pose as the Ludovisi Mars or a Medici from the Old Sacristy—no more. Is there really scorn and pity in the paintings of Aesop and Menippus? I cannot see them.

This does not greatly matter because Brown is so good at reading the social drama of the régime and the court career of its painter. In *A Palace for a King* (first published in 1980 and now republished in paperback), he and his collaborator, J. H. Elliott, take us through the story of the creator of the Buen Retiro. Olivares, who shared in the national fate and died mad. The life of Velázquez is more truly the stuff of tragedy because he was so rarely gifted. In the last twenty years before he died at sixty-one he painted no more than forty pictures. But what pictures! Though he dispensed his genius so grudgingly, he made, as Brown writes, every picture count in his bid not only on behalf of the nobility of art but in pursuit of the status of nobility in itself. He wished above all else for the rank of knighthood in an élite order which conferred a kind of social consecration in the gift only of the Crown and the Deity (on whose behalf the Pope could be induced to intervene). The court which sat in try the validity of Velázquez's claims was like a process for canonization or else some trial imagined by a Baroque Kafka.

The whole story was replete with ironies. It was pathetic that Velázquez of all people should have wanted so much to be ennobled. Yet that became the object of his life; everything else was subordinated in it. While he gave more and more time to court duties in order to recommend himself to the King, the King was coming to value art and his collections more than anything else and would have preferred that Velázquez had been at his ease. We think of Velázquez as a gentleman and the greater exponent of gentlemanliness in art. But his infatuation with courtly distinction gave him a positive greed for its rewards and he diverted into his own pocket money from the wages of the cleaners. His family was made to pay it back after his death.

The best commentary on the chilling hauteur of the image to which Velázquez devoted his life is the account of the reception of the French envoys to the Franco-Spanish truce in 1759. Having galloped the last leg of the journey to symbolize the impatience and passion of their young King for his bride, the French were at last shown into the presence of Philip IV who "greatly resembled his portraits", waiting alone and motionless at the end of the Hall of Mirrors. He acknowledged them with the barest perceptible touch of his hand to his hat, and not one quiver of an eyelid more. When M. le Maréchal presented the crucial letter the King "did not change his posture". Frozen by the sober severity, the French observer noted "an air of grandeur and majesty which I have never seen anywhere else...". Another observer recorded that Velázquez's finery and bearing were indistinguishable from the old nobility. "It indicates", as Brown writes, "that on this occasion at least the artist had become his own work of art."

In "Las Meninas" Velázquez painted what was for him the ultimate blessing—the proximity of royal companionship. The cliff-hanging dialogue in which he engaged with an audience of one—the monarch—eventually carried its point. The knighthood was awarded and he was at last entitled to paint the red cross of the order of Santiago on his own breast in his undaunted masterpiece. The apparent struggle between artist and courtier for supremacy in this mysterious man never took place at all. Not only were the two aspects far from inimical; they eventually discovered an identity which, to judge from the pictures, was beautiful. Even the sorry obsession with noble rank played an integral part in the poetics that he brought to his image of human separateness. The impersonality of his art was a profound appreciation of the chilling Spanish style of kingship. The image that he created, like the collections that he assembled and the celebrations that he superintended, all transmitted the quality of magnificent reticence that was his own. Despite its limitations this remarkable book reveals to us a kind of artist that we hardly imagined could exist.



A detail from Velázquez's "Young Girl", taken from Jonathan Brown's Velázquez reviewed here.



# Radical Sikh

Ian Jack

RAJIV A. KAPUR  
Sikh Separatism: The politics of faith  
272pp. Allen and Unwin. £20.  
0043301792

A person who knows nothing of India can form a strange view of that country through the eyes of expatriate Sikhs. Sikhs are, apparently, a persecuted minority who live under the iron heel of "Hindu imperialism". They cannot worship freely, they suffer discrimination in the labour market and police repression in their towns and villages. Their brave role in India's freedom struggle has been totally misrepresented and obscured by "Hindu historians". One hears remarks such as: "You British know of Gandhi but you have never heard of Bhagat Singh." (He killed a British police officer and was hanged in 1930.)

It is usually impossible to puncture this sort of expatriate fiction with the everyday evidence of Indian life: that Sikhs are among the most prosperous communities in India; that their party, the Akali Dal, at present forms the state government of Punjab; that they are well represented in all government services; that there are Sikh judges and Sikh generals; that the President of India himself is a Sikh; that Bhagat Singh has a large and well-tended memorial — so big that you can ramble over it — on the banks of the Sutlej near Ferozepur, where the British cremated his body.

To gawping members of Sikhs, in India as well as abroad, this information is irrelevant. They choose to see India as a state that oppresses them, inside which they can never now feel free or safe. The past two years have provided both Hindus and Sikhs with a bitter stock of grievance. Sikhs remember the Indian army's invasion of the Golden Temple and the deaths of 2,000 Sikhs in the Delhi riots. Hindus find it

hard to forget Mrs Gandhi's assassination and the Sikh terrorism which every month continues to claim dozens of Hindu lives. The two communities have drawn apart. It becomes difficult to resist the conclusion that the talk of "persecution" and "discrimination" is a prophecy which will one day fulfill itself. Khalistan, the independent Sikh state which seemed a harmless fantasy three years ago, must now be reckoned a distinct possibility.

India is, of course, a large and complicated country which has lived with predictions of disintegration for most of its independent life. Most analysts saw the obvious sources of disaffection: great social injustice, rivalry between castes and language groups, the uncertain loyalties of the Muslim minority. But few predicted that the biggest threat to India's unity and stability would come from a religious group which is recognized as a branch of Hinduism by the Indian constitution, which numbers only 2 per cent of the Indian population, and which has benefited so much from India's economic growth. Sikh militancy has strained the conventional explanations for social unrest (Indian Marxists, for example, have yet to come up with a convincing theory) and it cannot be wished away, as some Indian politicians would like it to be, as the product of "international terrorism" or "foreign interference". Or even by an old saying in Hindi that after moon strikes no Sikh is quite right in the head.

Rajiv Kapur, in his excellent study of Sikh politics over the past 100 years, shows, for the first time in detail, how one strand of Sikh thought has come to dominate Sikh politics and religion; how political and religious power have become inextricably entwined; and why certain Sikh leaders need to denounce "persecution" even if they have first to invent it. The author never puts his argument so crudely, but it might be summed up by saying that because many Sikhs now think of themselves as religious warriors, as armed defenders of their

faith, they feel the need to fight a religious war. If this is true, then it lifts a solution to the present crisis in Punjab well beyond the reach of any "reasonable" proposals and compromises offered by the Indian Government; while any "unreasonable" action — for example, martial law and severe repression of Sikh militants — will simply spread and substantiate the belief among Sikhs that a religious war is necessary.

Kapur traces the roots of the Sikhs' communal ideology to the late nineteenth century when, in the words of one English historian, the "boa-constrictor of Hinduism" threatened to re-absorb an anti-Brahminical and monotheistic sect which had broken out of the fold 400 years before. Many Sikhs had lapsed from the faith after the collapse of the Sikh empire in 1849. Hindu idols had to appear in Sikh temples. Hindu proselytizers and Christian missionaries made their rounds by bullock-cart.

By the beginning of this century the question of a separate Sikh identity — what was a Sikh? — had become a major public issue in Punjab; and was answered by a Sikh reformer who laid as much emphasis on behaviour as on theology. Being a Sikh became synonymous with being a member of the *khalsa*, the warrior brotherhood of the pure whose martial traditions had been sustained by the British army. As a self-image it was extremely potent. The reformers established control of most Sikh temples in the Punjab in the 1920s and used temple revenues to fund a party, the Akalis or "immortal ones", which presented itself as the only political custodian of the true faith.

The Akalis saw the Punjab as a homeland which they could dominate politically, but discovered when the British began to give the Indian provinces a degree of popular govern-

ment, that there simply were not enough Sikhs. Only 13 per cent of the Punjab's population was Sikh, and Akali demands for political parity with the Hindus and the Muslims were refused. Even after the partition of the subcontinent and the exchange of populations, the Sikhs still found that they numbered only 35 per cent of the population in that part of Punjab that went to India. Thereafter, the Akali demand for a separate state, first formulated in 1946, became blurred with their agitation for a *Punjab siba*, a linguistic state within the Indian union, which was eventually granted in 1966. But even here the Sikhs were (and are) only a bare majority; and, as Sikhs do not vote exclusively on communal lines, the Akalis did not win more than 30 per cent of the vote until the state elections of 1985.

Kapur says that the Akalis' "inability to achieve a position of political authority only drove them further towards political extremism". They continued to use religious slogans to raise support for non-religious demands, launched mass agitations, and those issues "which highlighted the distinctiveness of the Sikh community". His book, then, is a history of frustration; not the frustration of the Sikh community as whole, but of a political-religious leadership which, in the face of demography and secular politics, believes it has a divine and historical right to power. "O Singhs! We ask for freedom and they want to enslave us deeper into slavery", said the Akali leader, Tara Singh, during his campaign to win a smaller, less Hindu-ridden Punjab from Jawahar Lal Nehru. To most non-Sikhs such hyperbole may make little sense, but no doubt it would find a loud echo today in Sikh temples across the world.



Maharaja Jai Singh II of Gwalior and his shrine. Bourn and Shepard's sepia-toned photograph is reproduced from the book reviewed below.

## Stately pleasures

Louise Nicholson

NAVYEN PATNAIK  
A Second Paradise:  
Indian courtly life 1590-1947  
192pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £15.95  
0385 199929

Paradise on earth for the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan was to sit in his Delhi fort far from rural India. In a luxuriant room with a jewel-inlaid silver ceiling he is reported to have sighed: "If on earth there be a paradise of bliss, it is this. Oh! It is this! It is this!" A *Second Paradise: Indian Courtly Life 1590-1947* is a charming and highly visual tribute to exotic and extravagant Indian rulers, both Mughal and Rajput.

Stuart Cary Welch provides the introduction and a brief historical summary, making clear the role of the Indian king. "A king should look like a king, even if he is unable to behave like one; and everyone else, from the

queen . . . to the special servant who cleans up after elephants, should also be true to their stations."

Naveen Patnaik, historian and friend of many former rulers, comments on the paintings and photographs, mostly from private collections, that he has selected. For example, opposite a finely detailed Mughal painting of a feast, he tells us that the banquet might have begun with cool sherbets and progressed through such delicacies as lamb's testicles, heart of lotus, sea tortoise and rice covered with sheets of gold. Other paintings come alive with details of a baby prince's routine, a harem's hierarchy, a courtesan's preparations for her lover or the use of intoxicants for war and courtship. Contemplating the delicate princess and maidens painted by Bhanu, a modern Jaipur watercolourist, scattered throughout the book, the reader is almost lulled into agreement with the epilogue which bewails the influence of the British which destroyed this closed, self-centred and feudal paradise.

# Living with uncertainty in economics

Frank Hahn

KENNETH J. ARROW  
Collected Papers  
Volume 1: Social Choice and Justice  
340pp.  
031133399  
Volume 2: General Equilibrium  
240pp.  
031134344  
Volume 3: Individual Choice under Uncertainty  
284pp.  
03113736X  
Volume 4: Economics of Information  
294pp. Basil Blackwell.  
031137378  
£29.50 each.  
Volume 5: Production and Capital  
496pp. Harvard University Press. £24.95.  
0674137779  
Volume 6: Applied Economics  
280pp. Harvard University Press. £19.25.  
0674137787

At any one time there are more or less urgent economic problems which we are all aware of. Not long ago it was inflation, now it is unemployment and the possibility of industrial stagnation. In the same way individuals in the course of their lives are likely to face urgent medical problems. But while we consult doctors when we are ill and are reconciled to the circumstance that many illnesses have no present cure, we behave quite differently and have quite different expectations when it comes to our economic ills. Then the pronouncements of amateur economists like Nigel Lawson and of non-economists like Mrs Thatcher command at least as much and probably more respect than those of professional economists who lack the intellectual respectability which would earn them the same serious attention which we accord to doctors.

Yet not only do economists know a great deal more about an economy than do non-economists, they also, more important, know what they don't know. This clearly is not the case with most politicians. One of the reasons why economics is often not taken seriously is that economists, especially those active in public life, often fail to communicate their extensive knowledge of their own ignorance. Whenever this is put to some economist in the Treasury, one is told that ministers would soon dispense with your services if you did not deliver definite answers with a suitable air of certainty.

But of course this is not the whole explanation. Economic problems lie at the heart of politics even though politicians cannot afford to deal in the subtleties and uncertainties of precise economic analysis. Such an analysis is, moreover, often expressed in mathematical form — inaccessible not only to politicians but also to many of the economists who advise them. The increase in the rigour of economic theorizing has had to be paid for by simplification and abstraction, so that theories often appear irrelevant to the practical problems at hand. Even much professional empirical work employs sophisticated statistical techniques which make it hard for the politician or his economic adviser, grown rusty in public service, to evaluate.

The arrival of the last two volumes of Kenneth Arrow's six volumes of *Collected Papers* is an excellent occasion for reflection on these matters. Along with Paul Samuelson, he is the outstanding pure theorist of this century. He has covered a vast range and there can be few economists of the post-war generation whose work has not been in his shadow even when they have been unwilling to follow the path which he has cleared. His strength has been that he has only concerned himself with establishing what it is that can be claimed as true if certain assumptions are made; and nothing more. He has been speculative but he has made certain that his readers recognize speculation for what it is. If a case can be made for modern economics, and particularly economic theory, then Arrow's work must be the beginning and end of it.

His most celebrated work has been done on Social Choice and on General Equilibrium. The latter is a good starting point for any

account of Arrow's virtues and those of serious economic theorizing in general.

Adam Smith argued that, contrary to what might appear to be common sense, an economy of many self-seeking individuals interacting through markets was not only compatible with a coherent disposition of economic resources but would also be in some sense beneficial. Many people often fail to notice how surprising a claim this was. For surely a first impression would be that such an anarchic economy will lead to chaos. It was an intellectual achievement of the first rank for Smith to have argued the contrary. Ecologists have only recently arrived at an analogous conclusion.

But it was not until after the Second World War that Smith's insights were given that precise formulation which would allow them to be evaluated and their range of applicability discussed. But it was left to Arrow and Gerard Debreu to provide a definitive formulation. They showed in what precise circumstances there existed prices which, if taken beyond their control by all economic agents, would lead the self-interested actions taken in the light of these prices to be mutually consistent. That is, they proved the existence of competitive equilibrium. Arrow as well as others had already shown that the resulting allocation would be "Pareto-efficient", that is, that there was no other feasible allocation which could improve the welfare of some without reducing that of some others. This is Arrow's "First Fundamental Theorem of Welfare Economics". He also proved a "Second Theorem": that given any allocation there exists a set of prices and a wealth distribution between individuals, such that the chosen allocation would be a competitive equilibrium. These were remarkable achievements not only for what had been demonstrated but for the conclusive manner in which it was done. The Second Theorem in particular has in one form or another had considerable influence, particularly in the planned economies, and on cost-benefit analysis and project evaluation.

It was almost inevitable that when these results surfaced in the textbooks, and rumours about them reached practical men, they were thoroughly misunderstood. What Arrow and Debreu had demonstrated was the logical possibility of the truth of Smith's claims. They had not offered a description of any actual economy. Indeed it soon became clear, and to no one more than to Arrow himself, that what was needed for the logical demonstration would not do for the world. For instance, by an ingenious definition of commodities — which distinguished them not only by their physical characteristics and location, but also by their date of delivery and the "state of nature" at that date, Arrow and Debreu in their equilibrium-price formulation succeeded in conceptualizing the uncertainty of the future. But the cost was high; it had to be supposed that markets in which agents could transact were available for all the goods thus distinguished. For instance, there would have to be a market to pay for the delivery of umbrellas in London on January 1, 1989, provided it rains (and no delivery if it does not). We know that such a rich market structure does not exist, because if it did it would be impossible to account for an economy with (intrinsically worthless) money — that is, banknotes issued by the monetary authorities and not gold coins. All transactions which can be made are made now.

Arrow soon became aware of this difficulty and went on to show that the efficiency theorem would continue to hold with fewer markets provided it was possible to insure against every state of nature (by trading appropriate securities). But even that is too strong for the world and it also leads to certain technical problems in the proof that equilibrium is at all possible. Indeed it is possible to argue that much of Keynes's theory rests on the fact that certain markets do not exist and so on the absence of any appropriate co-ordinating mechanism for the uncertain projects of individuals over time. General misunderstanding of Arrow and Debreu's work is illustrated amply by what is called the "new macro-economics" (mainly propagated in the United States) which postulates an implicit co-ordination through rational expectations (formulated in the light of a "true" model of a particular economy) and totally ignores insurance (ie, uncertainty). Economists of this persuasion take the

theory to be descriptive and do not understand its *Gedanken-Experiment* nature. Others — radical economists for instance — make the same mistake.

In Volume Six of his *Collected Papers*, entitled "Applied Economics", Arrow gives a virtuoso display of how, starting from the *Gedanken-Experiment*, one is led to modify any particular concrete problem in order to reach applicable conclusions — proof that an abstract, non-descriptive theory has a powerful role to play in the serious analysis of actual economies. It provides, as it were, a way into the complexities and forces one to ask the right questions. For instance: what would be the result of leaving medical services and insurance entirely to the market? By asking this question first in an abstract setting one finds out why, even if markets were to work as well as they could, the outcome may be highly unsatisfactory. One may also find that markets do not work as well as the theory postulates.

Arrow writes: "Despite the favourable properties of the price system, I am no unrestrained admirer of it." Compare this, coming from the most careful and eminent analyst of the price system, with the market enthusiasm of politicians and of economists unaccustomed to disciplined and careful thought. Notice also how the belief of Marxist and radical economists that neo-classical economics is a defence of the status quo is given the lie. Indeed both groups could do better than read Volume Six from cover to cover, as should those who hold that pure economic theory is irrelevant to practical problems.

For an example take the essay, "Uncertainty and the Welfare Economics of Medical Care". Arrow here notes in particular that "The major competitive preconditions . . . are three: the existence of competitive equilibrium, the marketability of all goods and services relevant to costs and utilities and non-increasing returns". He then shows in detail why these preconditions fail in the case of medical insurance and mounts a powerful argument against leaving it to the market. On "marketability" he notes that it is impossible to draw up insurance policies which "sufficiently distinguish between risks" and the difficulties insurance itself gives rise to by making people "less careful in avoiding risks". He points out that private individuals lack much of the relevant information and that since information is a "public good" the market cannot be expected to supply adequate amounts of it. He makes the point that a doctor's customer "cannot test the product before consuming it" and that in medical transactions one must take it for granted that one's doctor, unlike a businessman, is not a pure maximizer of profits. In medicine there is a "Collective Orientation" (Talbot Parsons) which "distinguishes medicine and other professions from business where self-interest . . . is the accepted norm".

Arrow then homes in on the most notable deviations from the competitive model. Thus there are entry restrictions to the medical profession (partly occasioned by the need to give guarantees of minimum competence); price discrimination between doctors; insurance which sets up a conflict between hospitals (geared to profit) and the insurance company; and insurance of the "pooling" variety, in which people differently at risk are treated equally (when efficiency requires unequal treatment). The list continues and is often made more telling by statistics. The arguments are too numerous to be adequately summarized here.

There are two conclusions: a) "It follows that the government should undertake insurance in those cases where this market, for whatever reason, has failed to emerge" and b) "The failure of the market to insure against uncertainties has created many social institutions in which the usual assumptions of the market are to some extent contradicted . . . The logic and limitations of ideal competitive behaviour under uncertainty force us to recognize the incomplete description of reality supplied by the impersonal price system." The whole essay is a model of economic argument.

This same volume also contains Arrow's well-known work on the economics of race discrimination. Again, theory poses the question: if a black and a white worker are equally productive why should profit-seeking firms be

willing to hire a dearer white? Would the market not make pay-discrimination between the two races (or between men and women) impossible? The second question would be: given a preference for one group or another by employers, or an aversion among white workers to working with blacks, would we expect single-race firms if the latter are profit maximizing? And so on. Arrow shows how, once again starting from the abstract case, these questions can be given convincing answers. In particular there is no reason to expect that the "invisible hand" is also a moral hand, which will remove discrimination. His argument could have been strengthened by an appeal to game theory, which has only recently become significant in economics. In particular, even though I get no direct disutility of mixing with blacks if others do so, I may be (socially or otherwise) punished by deviating from the norm. Though Arrow does not claim to have exhausted the subject one would have to search widely to find some of its fundamental aspects treated better.

Volume Five is more technical, and concerned with many applications of dynamic control theory to economics. It starts off with a fascinating non-economic paper "On the Use of Winds in Flight Planning" written during Arrow's war service and containing much of the mathematics needed to deal with such economic problems as "Optimal Capital Adjustment". Arrow's knowledge of and interest in fields other than economics, not only physics or meteorology but also Shakespeare, history and Chinese art, is probably one reason why he towers over the rest of us when he actually thinks economics.

Volume Five contains one very famous paper, "The Economic Implications of Learning by Doing". This was stimulated by work of Nicholas Kaldor in the 1950s, in which he proposed that the rate of growth in (labour) productivity is determined by the rate of growth of capital per worker. On the face of it this was conventional economics, but Kaldor linked it to technical progress and not to ordinary capital-labour substitution in a production function, the reality of which he denied. Arrow took over the idea but made it both precise and plausible. He drew on empirical observations in the manufacture of air-frames to postulate "learning by doing", which in this context translates to making productivity depend on past cumulative investment. His model was complete and rigorous and showed that the social benefits of investment exceeded private ones. It is unlikely that this is the full explanation of technical progress and since the paper was written there has been some notable work on the micro-theory of the innovation process. None the less it took as its subject an ingenious idea and formulated it with a precision which made it possible to discuss it seriously.

One cannot conclude without at least some reference to Arrow's work on Social Choice (Volume 1) or on Information (Volume 4) and on Uncertainty (Volume 3). He originated the whole subject of Social Choice in his PhD dissertation and he has been a dominant figure in the other two. But the *opus* is so large, the arguments are so subtle and the building on previous work so extensive that I can do no more than scratch the surface here.

Arrow's Impossibility Theorem of Social Choice is justly celebrated, has given rise to a vast literature (not only in economics) and is a contribution which will surely survive even if economics as a subject does not. A straightforward question is asked, if every individual of a society has an ordering of certain alternatives A, B and C (ie he can rank them by preference without inconsistency) is there a mechanism, satisfying certain restrictions, which will yield a social (collective) ordering of these alternatives? (For instance, majority voting.) Among the restrictions on the mechanism are the following: If one person puts A higher in his preference and everyone else stays the same, then the social preference should not put A lower. There should be no single individual whose ordering is taken as the social one (no dictator), the mechanism should "work" for all well-defined individual preferences (unrestricted domain) and the social ordering of A, B and C should be independent of "irrelevant alternatives". Arrow proved that no mechanism satisfying these requirements existed. Thus for instance, voting paradoxes where A gets a majority over B and B over C and C over A are

## Emperor of vision

Andrew Topsfield

MICHAEL BRAND AND GLENN D. LOWRY  
Akbar's India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory  
162pp with black-and-white and colour photographs. Philip Wilson. £35.  
0856673129

When Akbar began to build the new city of Fatehpur Sikri near Agra in 1571, he was twenty-nine years old and had already extended Mughal power over most of northern India. Two years earlier his first surviving son had been born at the obscure town of Sikri under the protection of the resident Sufi Shaikh Salim Chishti. Akbar then conceived the desire to found a city "to give outward splendour to this spot which possessed spiritual grandeur". With the prodigious energy which he brought to all his projects, the "City of Victory" (Fatehpur) was planned and built from the local red sandstone within a few years. It remained the Imperial headquarters only until 1585, when Akbar as suddenly moved his capital to Lahore, and for later Mughal emperors it was no more than an occasional halting-place. The exceptionally well preserved complex of palace buildings still stands today like a deserted stage-set and is one of the most rewarding detours of the Indian tourist trail. At the same time, it retains a degree of mystery. Opinions differ as to the function of many of the external structures, which are still commonly known by the more or less fanciful names used by site guides since the nineteenth century. A great imaginative effort is needed to repopulate the empty halls and courtyards with their once spectacular life or to discern the overall plan of their originator. The present book is extremely helpful in this respect.

Michael Brand and Glenn Lowry, two young American scholars, have produced a selective but illuminating study of Mughal culture under Akbar, seen largely through the artefacts produced in his reign. Although published as the

catalogue of an exhibition held in New York last year, *Akbar's India* stands in its own right more than most such works. The main text consists of six loosely connected essays, exploring in some detail the personality and vision of Akbar and the development of Fatehpur Sikri and its library and workshops. The eighty well-chosen paintings and objects from the exhibition are generously illustrated, many of them in colour. Particularly good use is made of the documentary qualities of the paintings from the royal manuscript of the *Akbar-nama* in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The catalogue entries, however, occupy a relatively brief section at the end of the book and could have been given a fuller treatment. Here the authors adhere closely to the views of an older generation of Mughal art historians, most notably of Stuart Cary Welch. Others have questioned whether the gilded bronze lion heads from Cologne (no 74) are in fact Indian, and in a recent paper Robert Skelton has thrown doubt on the early dating of the inlaid chest from Stockholm (fig 15).

The preceding essays show greater originality, offering a fresh and well documented account of an extraordinary ruler, who was given both to profound mystical intuitions and unremitting practical activity. While absorbing himself in nightly discussions with ascetics and priests of all known faiths, Akbar would show equal zest in planning a military campaign, designing a new board game or setting himself to master the technical skills of his artisans. He saw himself as in some way sovereign of both the physical and spiritual worlds, of outer form and inner essence, and much of his interest in art lay in its symbolic mediation between the two. Brand and Lowry persuasively portray the development of Fatehpur Sikri and its court culture as a product of this intense personal vision. Several topics are treated in more detail than before, such as the Mughals' consciousness of their Timurid ancestry and the organization of their library and artists' workshops. The book is both an admirable introduction to its subject and a useful complement to the same authors' compilation, *Fatehpur Sikri, a sourcebook* (1985).



simply instances of the theorem.

Its importance to political theory is obvious and it is not clear that one can avoid some sort of interpersonal comparisons of welfare (which are excluded by Arrow) if one is to have social preferences which are responsive to private preferences. But subsequent work has shown Arrow's theorem to have unexpected applications elsewhere, for instance in the theory of incentives and public goods.

Information economics is now one of the most active areas of research and Arrow, as usual, was one of the first to enter it. The pure model of an economy which I have already sketched supposes agents to know all the market prices, to be able to distinguish between the different goods, and to have the same amount of information on the "state of nature". Not all these assumptions are true in the real world, and the explicit recognition of this has proved very fruitful, enabling us to understand many economic phenomena and institutions for which the Arrow-Debreu theory cannot account.

When different agents have different amounts of information one might expect a market for information to arise. However there are various difficulties (the public good aspect of information is one) in the way of this. In a paper entitled "The Value of and Demand for Information" Arrow looks at the teasing question of how someone demanding information should decide how much to offer for it when he does not know what he will get. He provides a partial solution to the problem. But it involves translating one's beliefs into the language of probability calculus – something which practical decision-makers are obviously unwilling to do.

Another line paper is his "Higher Education as a Filter". In the writing of which Arrow was probably stimulated by his eminent pupil A. Michael Spence. If employers cannot directly observe the quality of the workers whom they are hiring there will be an inducement for workers to signal it by their educational qualifications. If it is the case that the more able find these less costly to acquire than the less able then these qualifications allow the employer to sort (approximately) applicants by quality. However it is only relative qualifications which matter. Arrow shows that if signalling (screening) is the sole purpose of possessing qualifications such as certificates and degrees, then in

general too many resources will be invested in acquiring them. Moreover there will be many possible levels of qualification, all compatible with satisfactory screening, and a lack of inducement for any worker to acquire more or fewer of them.

Arrow is a thoroughly neo-classical economist who recognizes that an economic theory powerfully organizes thought without on its own being descriptive or conclusive. He accepts the rational agent as a starting-point without being committed to anything more than the view that there is an important question to be asked if in fact we find agents not acting in their own interest, or irrationally. He accepts equilibrium analysis for many purposes not because he holds it to be the case that economies are always in equilibrium but because he realizes (unlike some modern "political economists") that out-of-equilibrium states are not present beyond our analysis. He has brought these tools and insights powerfully to bear on political theory and on the Rawlsian theory of justice. More than anyone else he has removed the corset of the pure Arrow-Debreu case. In so doing he has not only illuminated much that was unexplained but more importantly has never been tempted to say more than economists have any grounds for saying.

Arrow has set the stage for much modern economic theorizing and to many that stage will appear somewhat sparse. There are no poetic flights on the nature of man and of society, no invariant laws and, above all, no certainties. The theories say what they say and no more. Their range of applicability is given precisely. To build on them for practical purposes requires the same intellectual habits which created them. If these habits are present then, as these volumes amply illustrate, much practical understanding is possible and above all, coherent argument can take place. The economic theorist knows that matters could have been otherwise than they have been, and that there are many possible futures. By characterizing these possibilities he does not invite impotence but actions taken with eyes open. Certainly there is a long way to go. But the theory which Arrow and his co-authors and successors have built is all that we now have of honest and powerful thinking on the subject. It is doubtful that politicians and intellectual speculators can act and speak sensibly without its help.

## The 1930s once again

Roderick Floud

DEREK H. ALDCROFT  
The British Economy  
Volume 1: The Years of Turmoil 1920–1951  
264pp. Brighton: Wheatsheaf. £22.50  
(paperback, £7.95).  
0710801149

The British Economy is the latest of a long line of textbooks by Derek Aldcroft. It is the first of three volumes which will cover the economy from 1920 to the present day. Like most of Aldcroft's work, it is not intended to tax the innumerate reader; tables are few, graphs non-existent and there is a commendable effort to avoid jargon. Sometimes, indeed, the book slips instead into sloppy journalism: Labour MPs in 1945 are said to have been "literally spellbound" by their election success.

But what does the book tell us about the current state of British economic history? It tells us, in fact, both about the direction of research and about several problems arising out of the way in which the results of that research are presented.

As Aldcroft states in the preface, he has chosen to concentrate on economic policy, partly in the hope that studying the past can help us to understand our current difficulties. Yet this concentration does not entirely explain a major oddity of the book: it covers three decades, yet one – the 1930s – takes up half the space. The 1920s are summarily dismissed in forty-three pages as a "Chequered Decade" and the Second World War and the first Labour Government each receive scarcely more attention.

Odd though it seems, Aldcroft's arrangement does reflect the current concern, if not obsession, of many economists and economic historians with the 1930s. As the period of the last major depression, and sufficiently close to us for it to be plausible to make comparisons with today, the 1930s have become almost a retrospective test bed for current policy prescriptions. Thus Aldcroft counterposes external, macroeconomic and regional or industrial policy on the one hand, against the "natural forces of recovery" on the other, in seeking to explain the growth of output after 1932. The reader is, no doubt, meant to reflect on the

contrast between interventionist or Keynesian remedies for our current troubles and the view that government has little or no role other than through the control of money.

Yet such comparisons with the 1930s are often both facile and dangerous, particularly so if they are presented, as in this book, without many of the implicit or explicit assumptions which lie behind the detailed research. A good example is the chapter-heading used by Aldcroft, "Natural Forces of Recovery", a term which is never explained but which seems to imply that there are ineluctable forces within the capitalist economy which will produce recovery through new investment, if only workers will exercise restraint on wages and governments will cease meddling. A case can be made out for this view, but to call it any more "natural" or "real" than alternative views of the behaviour of the economy is as misleading as to use the words "natural ingredients" on breakfast cereal.

Misleading, also, are the bounds which Aldcroft sets on his subject. The case for comparisons with the 1930s as a guide to today is apparently strengthened if one can relegate to the dustbin of *ceteris paribus* a whole range of factors which are arbitrarily defined as "non-economic". Thus there is little or no place here for long-term population trends, or the health, education and training of the work-force, or even consumer preferences, except as a constraint on investment. Such tunnel vision is astonishing.

Last, Aldcroft gives the impression, often justified, that economic historians suffer from a congenital failure to make up their minds. He is himself a past master at what might be called "qualified history", in which every statement is weakened, every view modified; for example "We do not doubt that much of the recovery can be attributed to spontaneous causes or non-policy factors, but at the same time it may be wrong to dismiss the latter on the grounds of their marginal importance."

On this showing, economic historians still have much to do. They have to restrain facile attempts to learn from history; they must resist attempts to lop branches or even the main trunk from the tree of their subject; they must be more explicit in the theories that they borrow; and they must have the confidence to use those theories to arrive at explicit conclusions.

## Computo, ergo sum

Adam Hodgkin

JOHN HAUGELAND  
Artificial Intelligence: The very idea  
287pp. MIT. £14.95.  
0262081539

Towards the end of this amusing and wide-ranging study, John Haugeland tells a story in which Dr Phyllis Crock, an erstwhile plastic surgeon and real estate agent of Fort Lauderdale, discovers a method for synthesizing artificial wine from coal tar and swamp water. Haugeland considers some of the likely reactions to this important invention. The sceptics will be surprised if it tastes much better than kerosene; the debunkers will maintain that no matter how it tastes, it is not really wine; the enthusiasts will immediately call their wine merchants to place an order for a "dozen cases of Crypto-Cabernet"; and the abominators will deplore a wicked outrage that threatens thousands of jobs in the wine industry and

undermines a noble tradition. The topic of artificial intelligence (AI) has generated a similarly broad spectrum of highly polarized reactions. On the evidence of this book, Haugeland is to be classified as part sceptic and part enthusiast. In contradistinction to the debunkers and the abominators, he argues that AI may turn out to be rather useful and, if it hasn't yet lived up to the hopes of its boosters, it has been an important focus for scientific research.

Haugeland is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh, but the book is as much concerned with some fundamental questions in computer science and cognitive science – the new science of mind which seeks an interdisciplinary, convergent understanding of thought, language, vision, action and selfhood – as it is with traditional philosophical concerns. *Artificial Intelligence: The very idea* is a shrewd justification of the AI approach in philosophy and psychology but it is also a highly informative work – "robotics" is the only major area of AI where its coverage is thin. As well as containing concise and sharp definitions of fundamental issues in the phi-

losophy of logic and meaning, the book has excellent summaries of basic computer architectures and such hot topics in AI research as "expert systems", "knowledge organization", and "the frame problem", which is roughly the problem of how to give a computer program an adequate grip of the context in which it should operate. Haugeland's humorous approach to the history of philosophy verges on irreverence: "Hobbes was a great philosopher but an inconsequential physicist and a truly abysmal mathematician . . . René Descartes (1596–1650) was, on the other hand, a world-shaker at everything he touched." This is the *Easy Rider* school of the history of philosophy, milder than the carefully footnoted Senior Common Room version, but none the worse for that.

Haugeland is consistently good at exposition. Throughout the book are scattered several dozen "boxes", some as long as two pages, which he uses to explain key technical terms or explore issues at tangent to his main argument. They function in the same way as illustrative examples, parenthetical footnotes, or technical appendices, and the overall effect is of "pull-down menus" or "windows" in which the typography of the book world is effectively mimicking the conventions of current micro-computer software.

There have by now been enough books for and against the very idea of AI for Haugeland to be at risk of advancing a not very interesting philosophical thesis, especially since he is reasonably sceptical about some of the claims for AI research – while being enthusiastic for its prospects. He milks his colours to the most of Good Old Fashioned AI, which he takes to be the claim that rationalization is computation, and that computer programs might not only simulate human intelligence but might also be intelligent in just the same way as we are. It looks as though this gives us a good strong contrast with the way in which computers can be used to simulate other phenomena: traffic jams, hurricanes, or molecular structures, for

example. A computer program which simulates a rain storm is not rainy but Haugeland requires that a successful piece of AI software should be "intelligent" in the same sense as we are. According to the Good Old Fashioned view, a good AI vision program will not only perform well at various visual tests, it will perform them in the same way we do. Perhaps it will be vulnerable to the same optical illusions.

As Haugeland points out this is not only a strong thesis, it is also falsifiable. It might turn out that we are clever in ways in which computers cannot be. It might also turn out that AI is not a good way of doing psychology. The Good Old Fashioned view of AI is a bit stronger in its claims than it would be wise for Dr Crock to be in her claims for the wine derived from tar and swamp water. It is one thing to say that your artificial wine tastes as good as, or even better than, Bollinger or Chateau Latour, but it is another matter to claim that it is prepared according to the same principles or methods. If you claim the former you simply run the risk of being admonished or debunked by the lovers of good wine, but if you claim the latter, you run the risk of substantial damages for "passing off".

The view that AI not only should simulate the things we do with intelligence, but should also map and track the way we do them, goes right back to the early history of AI research, which in this case means a summer conference at Dartmouth, New Hampshire, in 1956. But the venerableness of the view should not prevent one from questioning it. Haugeland is at times in danger of too closely identifying AI and cognitive science. AI may be exciting enough if it can produce really clever software. Why should it also be expected to be closely congruent with good psychological theory? The psychological tendency may find AI to a Procrustean bed. If the pioneers of aviation had mistaken their discipline for ornithology, rather than aeronautical engineering, we might still be waiting for a bi-plane with a good coat of feathers and a plausible down chorus.

## Making do without truth

John Coates

DONALD N. McCLOSKEY  
The Rhetoric of Economics  
209pp. Wheatsheaf. £22.50.  
074500153X

Donald McCloskey must be credited with the singular achievement of introducing the major philosophers of the twentieth century into a discussion of the methodology of economics. That may sound a rather modest achievement, but the unfortunate truth is that economics has been peculiarly insulated from most of the schools of philosophical thought that are currently influencing the other social sciences. Wittgenstein's Ordinary Language Philosophy, Hermeneutics, Critical Theory, Deconstruction, and to a lesser extent the New Rhetoric, have all been hotly debated in neighbouring fields, and have thrown in doubt positivist conceptions of the social sciences. But they have rarely been mentioned in economics, so *The Rhetoric of Economics* constitutes something of a breakthrough.

McCloskey's main target is what he terms "modernism" in methodology. Modernism is roughly equivalent to positivism, although at times he defines it more broadly as "the program of Descartes . . . to build knowledge on a foundation of radical doubt". Now, critics of positivism are very fashionable these days, and even economists are fond of invoking Thomas Kuhn or Imre Lakatos to this end. But what is novel about McCloskey's argument is that instead of replacing modernism with some post-positivist methodology he suggests that we do away with methodology altogether.

From Richard Rorty's grand synthesis of Wittgenstein, Dewey, Heidegger,

Ger and Derrida, McCloskey has derived the idea that attempts to underwrite knowledge by first defining certain concepts such as "Truth", "Knowledge" and "Science" have been a failure. They have not worked because there is no property common to all true statements. Truth will vary depending on the purpose of the inquiry. Accepting this, Rorty does not then recommend a new Pragmatist epistemology; he just asks that we change the subject. We should not expect "something more than the retail, detailed, concrete reasons which have brought one to one's present view". There is no Truth, just a plethora of homely truths. McCloskey uses this line of thought to pillory not only economic modernism but any methodology, for "restricting the growth of the economic conversation to make it fit a philosopher's idea of the ultimate good".

Isocrates and other teachers of rhetoric at the time of Plato made a similar criticism of the philosophical search for indubitable foundations of knowledge, and during this century the lost tradition of rhetoric has experienced a resurrection. In the literature of the New Rhetoric it is pointed out that philosophy and science, at least since Descartes, have been solely concerned with deductive certainty, although at a later date the method of the experimental sciences was also accepted as valid. This implied that if deductive or experimental techniques were not employed, no rational thought was possible. Accordingly the social sciences set about to model themselves on one or other of these methods. But Chaim Perelman, Weyno Booth, and the other thinkers responsible for the rebirth of rhetoric maintain that most social questions are not amenable to deductive or experimental treatment, but that reasonable discussion can none the less take place. Rhetoric is nothing more and nothing less than argu-

ment in fields where certainty is unattainable. Economics is surely one such field. Therefore McCloskey suggests that rhetoric rather than methodology is the correct tool for studying economic inquiry. Through detailed examples he demonstrates that economists, despite paying lip-service to arcane methodologies, are really employing all sorts of rhetorical devices. And he does not believe that it could be any other way. The main conclusion of the New Rhetoric is that we should simply stop talking about methodology because we never follow its dictates anyway. Paying attention instead to our rhetoric could improve economists' prose, teaching and relations with other disciplines. In short, it could, as Isocrates suggested, prepare us for right living in society.

However, McCloskey never makes clear whether outdated methodological views have any effect on the way economics is actually practised, as opposed to the way it is thought about, and consequently whether or not the philosophical ideas employed to debunk methodology carry any implications for substantive economics. McCloskey distinguishes between what he calls Methodology and, below it in a "meta-economical hierarchy", method, which consists of the diverse tools economists use in their everyday activities "to fashion sturdy little arguments"; and he applies all his criticisms to the former. At times he recognizes that modernism has to some extent infected method, but the main drift of the book implies that at this level economics is all right as it stands.

But are everyday forms of inquiry so free from philosophical influence? The conceptions of Rationalism and Empiricism did not just inform our methodologies as economists; they also informed the substantive practice of economics. Economists may not operate accord-

ing to any clear-cut logic of scientific discovery, yet at a more fundamental level, they adhere to the philosophical positions criticized by, among others, Rorty and the New Rhetoric. For today mathematical modelling (the deductive method) and econometrics (the experimental method) seem to be the only forms of inquiry accepted as valid, and whatever is not couched in one or other of these "languages" is considered somehow unacceptable.

McCloskey needs to look harder at these philosophical biases of the discipline, for it is here, and not in the realm of methodology, that outdated notions have a harmful effect. The most outstanding example of this is the fate of Keynes's *General Theory*: Keynes repudiated, in his own words, both "pseudo-mathematical" modelling and the "Black Magic" of econometrics, producing instead a powerful, common-sensical argument. He did not think economists need ape the natural sciences in order to think systematically. But because it used the concepts of "ordinary discourse", subsequent generations of economists felt the need to give it a more scientific formulation, either in the form of "micro-foundations" or econometric specification. Neither of these attempts has been terribly successful; they have sacrificed much that is still fruitful in Keynes and have thus contributed to the "crisis in Keynesian economics".

In short, the insights of rhetoric could be used more effectively than McCloskey has used them to get the economics discipline to accept more readily ideas that cannot be couched in the languages of either Rationalism or Empiricism. Maybe then we could relocate the focus of economic inquiry, away from mathematics and towards public discussion of less rigorous but more relevant issues.

## Time out of mind

Lary Shaffer

JOHN M. O'DONNELL  
The Origins of Behaviourism: American psychology, 1870–1920  
299pp. New York University Press. \$40.  
0814761623

John M. O'Donnell has written a scholarly and detailed narrative which describes the events within experimental psychology preceding the appearance of behaviourism; the doctrine that psychology should ignore entities that cannot be observed – such as mind and consciousness – and focus on learning, rewards and punishments. This became the dominant mode of thought in psychology from 1920 until about 1970 and its influence is still widely felt.

As with any account of discovery, close examination makes it more difficult to determine exactly who was responsible for originating a given idea. Ideas in science are always derivative and O'Donnell has given a thorough account of the elements in the work of many scientists which became components of John B. Watson's definitive statement of behaviourism in 1920. O'Donnell has nicely resisted the urge to make his account merely a series of biographical sketches and has, instead, allowed the development of ideas in specific settings to be on-centre stage while individual scientists are in supporting roles.

The usual story of the origin of behaviourism is that it grew from the functional psychology of William James, John Dewey and James Angell who conceived of psychology as a practical science which aimed to discover how the mind worked. This story ignores two major influences discussed by O'Donnell. First, by 1920 the institutional climate fortuitously happened to be right for the growth of practical, research-oriented psychology in the universities. Second, behaviourism arose when it did as a reaction against the formal and sterile German psychology.

A number of the prominent American universities were effectively forced by institutional circumstances into supporting psychological research. In the late nineteenth century the appearance of new universities and the growth of existing ones had resulted in a shortage of qualified students. Student tuition was an important source of income needed to subsidize the salaries and research activities of a faculty. The offer of courses in psychology was designed to attract undergraduate students to otherwise stuffy philosophy departments. As the universities competed for the best faculty members, it became apparent that most talented men were likely to go where the teaching load was light and where assistants could be found to conduct research. So graduate students were employed as underpaid instructors and research assistants. The result was large graduate programmes in psychology. The machinery for the study of psychology was in place before 1920 but it still needed to adopt a research method.

In 1879 Wilhelm Wundt founded a labora-

tory for the study of experimental psychology in Leipzig. Wundt studied the mind by presenting a stimulus, such as a ticking metronome, and asking his subjects to describe the contents of their consciousness in response to the ticking. These verbal reports of experience were compared with those of other individuals and the results were published in ponderous volumes. William James noted that "this method taxes patience to the utmost, and could hardly have arisen in a country whose natives could be bored". Nevertheless, graduate study in Germany became an essential credential for aspiring psychologists elsewhere in Europe and in North America.

The roots of behaviourism are planted in the soil of Wundt's experimental psychology in so far as behaviourism adopted the view that the proper study of mankind was to be a scientific enterprise involving brass instruments in laboratories, not a matter of armchair philosophy. Yet in spite of successive plantings and considerable cultivation, German psychology failed to flourish in British and North American scientific climates.

A primary reason for this was that American psychologists of the late 1800s such as Wille, J. M. Cattell and Hall had to frame their arguments for the introduction of psychology into the academic curriculum solely in terms of its usefulness. The German psychology was scorned for this purpose because its goal was theory, not application. Initially, educational psychology prospered under these circumstances. It aimed to bring educational practice into line with the biologically determined sequence of mental development, and to determine which aspects of behaviour could be changed by making alterations in the environment. Data were collected using questionnaires as well as actual measurements of physical development. Both of these tactics quickly fell from favour. Questionnaires were not considered to be sufficiently scientific by some psychologists and physical measurements involved "the unfortunate loosening of children's garments", sparking a public outcry. Behaviourism, which advocated merely the observation of the behaviour of humans and other animals, was grasped as a way of solving these problems and came to be the dominant school of psychology in the following decades.

The third volume of *The Writings of Charles S. Pierce: A chronological edition*, compiled by Christian J. W. Kloesel and others at the Pierce Edition Project, Indiana/Purdue Universities, has recently been published (633pp. Indiana University Press. \$40. 0 253 372038). It covers Pierce's work from 1872 to 1878, including the most relevant parts of his *Photometric Reservations* and also his first contribution to the new experimental psychology, "Notes on the Sensation of Color". Volume One, 1857–1866, contains the writings that formed the basis for Pierce's studies in logic and the sign theory of cognition; Volume Two, 1867–1871, contains philosophical writings; scientific studies and the first significant article on the logic of relatives.

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# Driving back the barriers

P. W. Atkins

M. J. OSLER and P. L. FARMER (Editors)  
Religion, science and world-view: Essays in  
honour of Richard S. Westfall.  
Cambridge University Press. £32.50.  
0 521 30452 0

Thirteen essays by his former colleagues and students form this Festschrift to R. S. Westfall, the distinguished and influential historian of science. Westfall's three principal areas of interest, Newton, the relation of science and religion, and the historiography of science, are represented approximately equally, and the volume is an attractive summary of the range of his influence.

The striking feature of the papers is the resonance they have with a number of current issues in the interpretation and philosophical impact of modern science. Thus, the discussion by B. J. T. Dobbs of Newton's early chemistry can be read as an allegory on what science can and, some say, cannot treat. The seventeenth century generally identified chemistry with the study of the secondary qualities of matter (hence "stinks") and the primary qualities, such as extension, shape, and number, were in the domain of the mechanical philosophers, the physicists. This remnant of Aristotelianism still renders chemistry more abstract and inaccessible than physics to the general public, who remain distracted by appearances and have not accepted the union between the two types of property that sprang from Dalton's synthesis and has been clarified by modern research.

The second unspoken lesson implicit in the same chapter is that progress is made only when terms have struggled off their anthropomorphism and are so explicitly defined that they can be discussed unambiguously. Edward

Grant's account of the development of the concept of celestial perfection from the Middle Ages to the late seventeenth century could easily be extended to the current well-placed (or so it now seems) obsession with the symmetries of elementary particles. The failure of the ancient obsession with perfection was that it did not make the transition from the intuitive motivation of the concept to its quantitative, and hence dispassionate, expression.

Thus, in the sixteenth century, Bartholomew Amicus could still hope for success by tilting at cosmology with lances labelled dignity and nobility, and fail. At least John Buridan in the fourteenth century had to submit to the demands of what then passed for numerical analysis, and had compared the Prime Mover, who moved the whole heavens once a day, with the intelligence that moved the eighth sphere of the fixed stars, which move a mere one degree per year, and had deduced that their perfection was in the ratio of 36,000 to 1. Nevertheless, he too failed to make the crucial unambiguous definition of perfection, which has been made possible and exceptionally fruitful, by calling on the harsh, focused, rigid discipline of mathematics.

A great part of the struggles between concepts reported in these pages reflects the ebb and flow of battles between the scientifically and religiously fervent. The latter, then as now, feared the increasing kingdom of pestilence that was spreading over the at least professedly fair face of Christianity as science's successes became increasingly clear and public. Religion responded, as it still does today, by attempting to advance its own Treaty of Tordesillas, defining disjoint domains of interest for itself and for science.

The seventeenth-century version of this Canuting operation was Pierre Gassendi's

attempt to immortalize the soul within the paradigms of science. As Margaret Osler says, here, during the early decades of the seventeenth century, European intellectuals interested in the new science were actively concerned with formulating a philosophy of nature to replace the traditional Aristotelianism, which had suffered major setbacks in the wake of the Copernican revolution, the sceptical crisis following the Protestant Reformation, and the revival by humanists of various alternative philosophies of Nature. Then as now, the success of mechanical philosophy was seen to be the fast road to atheism and materialism. Even chemistry, with its attention focused on the secondary, was a worry, for the prevailing and hermetically inspired view that matter possessed its own internal sources of activity also seemed to threaten God's role in nature. Gassendi sought, as religiously committed scientists still seek, to accept the principal tenets of the then flourishing mechanistic science and effectively to restore and Christianize Epicurean atomism. Then as now, the stratagem of the defence of disjoint domains was advanced, with science on one side of the fence and religion on the other: the soul was asserted by Gassendi to have a double composition, with one component irrational, vegetative, and created by parents, and the other component the incorporeal mind created by God. The resonance of this view with the present is the supposition that the human soul is an actually existing entity, and perhaps an emergent property of a physical structure, the latter alone generated by parents. Indeed, modern arguments for the existence and immortality of souls are barely different from (and no more convincing than) Gassendi's mercifully succinct attempt, that since the rational soul is immaterial it is immortal.

Religion has always been concerned with the occult (in the earlier sense, of something hidden from rational discussion), and one chapter, by Ron Miller, explores the gradual constriction of the truly occult domain of religion as it has given way under the inexorable pressure of science; this also has its parallels today. Descartes justifiably boasted that he had

brought the occult within science, and Newton, Maxwell, Einstein and Schrödinger could have done so with even greater justification. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in electricity and magnetism, almost the paradigms of the occult in the seventeenth century. These phenomena defeated Newton, but gave way to the rational enquiry of Faraday and the synthesis and mathematical formulation of Maxwell in the nineteenth century. Here we see science at its best, driving back frontiers of understanding and striking the fear of God into the religious, as they realize that their frontiers are lying in its path.

If science is so successful at driving back the barriers, why has it not yet already achieved its object? A contribution to the answer is found in the discussion by Edward Ruestow of Jan Swammerdam's defence of the natural order, and his view that all living things had existed invisibly since the creation (which for him, with seventeenth-century notions of historical time, was not so long ago). The chapter faces the problem of how a presumably honest, well-intentioned observer could maintain the hypothesis of pre-existence in the face of investigations that included the use of microscopes and detailed studies of insect and amphibian metamorphosis. The key, of course, is the prejudice that stems from cultural conditioning. In Swammerdam's case, prejudice is easy to detect, since it is advertised in what to us seems so risible a manner, such as by speaking of the miraculous engendering of lice throughout Egypt as an irrefutable sign of the omnipotent activity of God's finger; in modern scientists who propagate religion, the prejudice is expressed in a manner which to contemporaries does not always seem so risible.

This is a stimulating book, ranging as it does from a study of our bygone pound note, which through the diagrams in its designs and in its editions gives a potted history of some of Newton's editions, to Agricola on coal and the light shed by coal on the east of past minds. Westfall must be pleased that he has inspired such scholarship, and that it can inspire others of a somewhat different outlook to pleasure and reflection.

## In a blink of an eyelid

David W. Macdonald

A. J. SUTCLIFFE  
On the Track of Ice Age Mammals  
224pp. British Museum (Natural History).  
£12.95.  
0 674 63777 1

St Phaeoourios was a pigmy hippopotamus. This revelation would be disturbing enough in its own right, without the additional disclosure that he was an hippopotamus that lived in Cyprus, some twenty-five degrees of latitude North of where hippopotami are supposed to be. This intriguing snippet is one among many (the Leviathan in the Book of Job was a mastodon) that spice the text of Anthony Sutcliffe's enjoyable and informative text. Entertaining though it is to discover that the ancient bison, *Gigantopithecus*, was revealed to science when his molars were sold as dragon's teeth in a Hong Kong drug store, Sutcliffe's book is far more than a romp through appealing anecdotes. It is a concentrated but highly readable summary of the current state of Quaternary science.

Championing the adage that the key to the future is in the past, and jibing at our post-glacial complacency, the opening chapters press home the geologist's message that things are not what they used to be; far less where they used to be. Even during the last 1.6 million years of the Quaternary geological period, barely a blink of a paleontological eyelid, there may have been as many as seventeen Ice Ages. These have been punctuated by interglacials lasting about ten millennia, of which the current one began about 10,000 years ago (perhaps the Little Ice Age of 1500-1850, which evicted the Vikings from Greenland and put English vineyards out of business, was just a hint of what is to come). Unravelling the various strands of evidence on past Ice Ages, and the mammals that endured them, involves

dissecting the complicated interactions of climatic change and continental drift. Thus 500 million-year-old glacial deposits in the Sahara desert are not there because the world was once covered with ice from pole to pole, but because changes in the tilt of the earth's axis and the drifting of continents conspired to put the Ordovician South Pole in the middle of the Sahara, roughly where the Equator is today. The highly technical explanations of these phenomena are presented with great clarity. The first seven chapters describe the ideas, tools and material with which palaeozoologists reconstruct the past. Although the book is aimed at a general readership, Sutcliffe does not pull his punches, and delves deeply and succinctly into topics ranging from carbon dating to Milankovitch's astronomical theories of climatic cycles.

The latter half of the book conjures up images of what cave-men saw, in regions from the Thames to Tasmania. Today only Landseer's lions prowling in Trafalgar Square, but 120,000 years ago real lions lived there, along with hippos and other tropical fauna. It was the remains, in a cave in Cyprus, of contemporaries of the London hippos, that once left skeletal substance to the legend of St Phaeoourios. A few millennia later and their place was taken by musk oxen and mammoths, denizens of a tundra that had supplanted the tropics. Colour paintings, by the apostolically named Peter Snowball, bring these Ice Age faunas alive. These pictures bear close scrutiny; they cleverly reconstruct views of the same landscapes at intervals of 100,000 years or so. In this way, elements of a 120,000-year-old view of the Gower coast, populated by hyaenas, elephants and rhinos, remain as landmarks in an 18,000-year-old panorama of the same place, featuring reindeer and lemmings. Doubtless I will not be the only reader who resolves to go to the Gower at the first opportunity to enjoy the contemporary view with the benefit of new hindsight.

## Arms and the young man

James Campbell

PETER GRIFFIN  
Along with Youth: Hemingway, the early years  
258pp. Oxford University Press. £12.95.  
0 19 503680 8  
MICHAEL REYNOLDS  
The Young Hemingway  
291pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £14.95.  
0 631 14786 1  
JEFFREY MEYERS  
Hemingway: A biography  
646pp. Macmillan. £16.95.  
0 333 42126 4  
ERNEST HEMINGWAY  
Dateline: Toronto: The complete Toronto Star  
dispatches, 1920 to 1924  
478pp. New York: Scribners. \$19.95.  
0 684 18515 6

In 1950 the reporter Lillian Ross was at the airport to meet Ernest Hemingway in order to begin researching a profile for the *New Yorker*. Under one arm Hemingway was holding a briefcase containing the manuscript of his new book, and under the other "a wiry little man" whom he gave a tight hug as Ross approached. "He read book all way up on plane," Hemingway said. "He liked book. . . . Book too much for him. Book start slow, then increase in pace until it becomes impossible to stand." Ross went on to report that Hemingway shot pigeons with an imaginary rifle on Fifth Avenue, sat in the front seat of New York taxis so as to keep his eyes on the road, as he had learned to do in the First World War, and continually punched himself in the stomach, hunched his shoulders, feigned and raised his guard against imaginary opponents in the course of conversation.

"Back" was *Across the River and into the Trees*, which was indeed impossible to stand, though not for the reasons intended, and the lunatic talk which Ross described was the residue of an empathy with real Indians encountered during Hemingway's boyhood and youth in the Michigan backwoods. A far better example of something which starts slow and increases in pace to create a powerful emotion is the five-page "Indian Camp", the first story in his first proper book, and possibly his best. In *Our Time*, Hemingway was drawn to the Indians through their links with a world beyond New-World America and beyond the law, as he was forever to be attracted to those who tried to live outside social conventions; a fascination which contributed to the formation of his entirely original prose style, and eventually, as it was focused more on "bullfighters and bullfighters" — to borrow from Zelda Fitzgerald — to his demise.

It is rare, as well as at times being difficult, to see clearly the young man who was raised in the posh Chicago suburb of Oak Park, became a reporter as a prelude to being a writer, offered his services to the Red Cross in wartime, and always fell in love with older women. Peter Griffin's *Along with Youth* (the first of a projected three-volume biography) and Michael Reynolds's *The Young Hemingway* are therefore welcome. Both authors leave him trying to make something of his war experience in fiction (so far unsuccessfully), married to Hadley Richardson, boarding the ship for Paris — the point at which most studies are likely to begin. They stress the influence on the young man of a weak father who eventually committed suicide, and of a strong, defiant mother who wrote to her son upon publication of his first novel, "surely you have other words in your vocabulary but 'damn' and 'blotch' . . ." (He did, though he later applied the latter epithet to her gladly enough.)

Although the biographers concentrate on the same period — 1918-21 — their narrative approaches are different. Reynolds uses what his publishers call a "flashback/flashforward technique", which often seems like no more than a disorientating tendency to leap about in time. This, coupled with his desire to spotlight the flaws in Hemingway's character and dwell on their significance, makes his book less of a pleasure to read than that of Griffin, who offers the bonus of five "new" — that is, unpublished — short stories, plus other fragments. Together these two biographies show a young man with considerable power to dominate those around him, though always unsure of

himself, by turns generous and cruel, and as quick to lie about himself as to deliver home truths to others.

Reynolds and Griffin have both had access to previously unpublished correspondence between Hemingway and Hadley, whom he kept with him, in spirit if nothing else, until the very end. The portrait of her in the posthumously published memoir of the 1950s, *A Moveable Feast*, is generally reckoned to be idealized; but judging by the letters printed here she really was as tolerant, forgiving and wise as he made her out to be. When he told her about an affair he was having with another woman and described it as "obscene", she replied that that wasn't such a wicked word; when, the next day, he informed his fiancée that he had imagined the end of their relationship, "every detail, and all the pain", she answered simply: "I think we both might feel a little happier if we could see each other right now."

Jeffrey Meyers, in his biography covering the total span of Hemingway's life, remarks about Hemingway's desertion of his wife and son in 1926 that Hadley probably got the best years of his life — a fair and sensible comment, like many in this book. By leaving out what Ernest had for breakfast, the colour of the walls in the room he happened to be sleeping in, and even (Griffin) how cosy he felt in bed on a particular night, Meyers is able to bustle in his information-packed way through the same period as Griffin and Reynolds in a mere sixty-two pages. *Hemingway* undoubtedly supersedes the 1969 biography by Carlos Baker, which has increasingly been seen to reflect its subject's own version of events. One would have to reach back to Byron, Meyers suggests, before finding a literary man-of-action to match Hemingway. But Byron's story was not that of a valorous young man turned vainglorious braggart, who soaked himself in drink, was battered half to death through accidents (enumerated in a grisly appendix), received electro-convulsive therapy, and finally shot himself in the hall where he could be sure his wife would find him first.

Writing elsewhere, Meyers rebuked Baker for his belief that "no biography can portray a man as he really was", responding loftily: "The more ambitious and successful biographer is an investigative reporter of the spirit." Meyers has indeed come up with the better book, but Baker's modesty is, nevertheless, appealing. Meyers fills out well the familiar pattern of Hemingway's life, but his pocketbook Freudianism and devotion to documentary evidence (welcome on its own terms) do not amount to an investigation of the spirit. There is, in fact, more life in the comparatively brief *New Yorker* profile by Lillian Ross — to whom Meyers is also harsh — than in these three books together.

Somewhere in the midst of all his activity Hemingway lost his talent. The roots of that loss are possibly sunk in the same ground from which the talent flourished: the First World War, a traumatic event from which he returned with 227 leg wounds and a limp which gradually became a swagger. Hemingway's work thereafter throve on action and wounding (and also, as Scott Fitzgerald said, on women: "A *Foreword to Arms* is a big book. If there's another big book I think we'll find Ernest has another wife"). The action seemed, to Hemingway, to give men a lives substance; the injuries to lend them tragedy. He would have written about death even if he had not come close to it in the war, but no doubt less profoundly and less precisely; his experience on the battlefield empowered him to see death as a living presence, and this presence imbals all his best work.

Although he was inclined to be vague about the point later, he never actually engaged in any fighting in the First World War, being attached to the Italian Red Cross, whose duties included handing out chocolate to those who did. During one such exercise, he was caught in an explosion. Afterwards, according to legend (and Griffin), Ernest saw two soldiers lying nearby, one of whom was dead.

The other soldier had taken shrapnel in the chest but was still alive. Ernest hoisted up the wounded Italian in a fireman's carry, and, with his own legs full of shrapnel, started back towards the trenches.

Meyers is in substantial agreement with this version, but Reynolds has dug out a contemporary



porary interview with the gullant would-be soldier printed in the *New York Sun*, and comes up with something quite different: "He was distributing cigarettes in the Plave district", the *Sun* reporter wrote.

When a shell from a trench mortar burst over his head, he said the slugs from the shell fell like the stings of a wasp as they bore into him. He crumpled up and two Italian stretcher bearers started over the parapet with him.

No mention here of hoisting up a wounded soldier in a fireman's carry. Such lying would have been quite in character, but it may be that you don't believe everything you read in the papers: it is likely that Hemingway would have given the *Sun* an entirely different story to that which, documents show, he told his parents

and friends immediately after the event?

Reynolds reports that, back in Oak Park, he kept on wearing a uniform (to which he was not entitled anyway) long after everyone else had given theirs up. In effect, he kept wearing it for the rest of his life. Hemingway understood combat: he excelled in describing not so much the thrill and horror of battle (though on occasions that too) but the hopelessness of the individual caught up in it. The best writing he did is contained in the often oblique war novels and stories of the 1920s: *In Our Time*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *Men Without Women* and *A Farewell to Arms* — ordered by chronology and also pretty much by merit. It is frequently remarked, in reference to his later works, that Hemingway wrote like one of his own imitators — but no imitator wrote as badly as he was capable of doing in the 1930s and 40s.

In the 1920s, in order to mix the material the First World War had given him into his boyhood experience of the lakes and woods, Hemingway developed a prose which was directly responsible to sensation, which registered minor alterations in mood, and was alert to the nuances of weather, taste and smell. It is a style that is responsive to the new cinematographic — in that it was prepared to leave out what the screen could show better — and it is, above all, a style which permits its narrative user to avoid confronting his in user emptiness.

In "Now I Lay Me", Nick Adams is lying in a military hospital bed recovering from an injury:

So on some nights I would try to remember all the animals in the world by name and then the birds and then fishes and then countries and cities and then kinds of food and the names of all the streets I could remember in Chicago, and when I could not remember anything at all any more I would just listen. And I do not remember a night on which you could not hear things. If I could have a night I was not afraid to sleep, because I knew my soul would only go out of me if it were dark.

Here Hemingway is being quite explicit about it; in other stories when there is a naming of

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Edited by J. Rufus Fears

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parts, or an inventory of nettles and sensations — such as "Big Two-Hearted River" — neither the war nor its traumas are ever mentioned but stalk the main story-line as a kind of shadow-text. As he later began to write more about the chance of glory which war offered to the outer man, leaving behind its catastrophic effects on the inner, the style became over-ripe. He never properly recaptured it until *A Moveable Feast*, a book written with the aid of diaries kept in Paris in the 1920s.

The early stories served up by Griffin, while no good in themselves, are nevertheless worth having because they illustrate how rapidly Hemingway advanced from how to get your photograph taken in Toronto in 1920 to British intervention in the Greco-Turkish conflict two years later — and also how polished his technique became before he dedicated it to fiction. Only the most assiduous Hemingway scholar will find a use for his forty-word dispatch from the 1922 Genoa Conference, but the dross yields more than the occasional nugget, including curiosities such as "The Sport of Kings" from the *Toronto Star Weekly*.

asleep against the walls of the building . . . . A collection of sketches, "Crossroads", written the same year, has the atmosphere of *The Sun Also Rises*, and in another fragment a small boy is told by his father, "Don't think, Jimmy, notice", heralding the many Hemingway heroes who could not risk thinking — for fear, in fact, of what they might notice.

The dispatches collected in *Dateline: Toronto* for the first time (a number were previously published in *By-Line*, 1967) show how good a journalist the young Hemingway was — the subjects range from how to get your photograph taken in Toronto in 1920 to British intervention in the Greco-Turkish conflict two years later — and also how polished his technique became before he dedicated it to fiction. Only the most assiduous Hemingway scholar will find a use for his forty-word dispatch from the 1922 Genoa Conference, but the dross yields more than the occasional nugget, including curiosities such as "The Sport of Kings" from the *Toronto Star Weekly*.

The friend who enlis up over the telephone.  
The nurse that has been especially wired for Pini-lico.  
The letting in of the friends in the office.  
The search for remedy money.  
The studying of the entries.  
The mysterious absence from the office.  
The time of suspense and waiting.  
The feeling of excitement among the friends in the office.  
The trip outside to buy a sporting extra.

The search for the results.  
The sad return upstairs.  
The hope that the paper may have made a mistake.  
The feeling among the friends in the office that the paper is right.

The attitude of the friends in the office.  
The feeling of remorse.  
The lightened pay envelope.

For the rest of his life, Hemingway was to write directly from experience, often employing just such a form of telegraphese (nir must assume that his editor then knew he had a future novelist on his hands), sometimes using real names and actual events. The hero of each of his first three books is wounded in the war, in two cases in a manner similar to Hemingway; in *Our Time* uses the name "Wemedge" (Hemingway's boyhood nickname) and in a few early draft pages of *The Sun Also Rises* Jake Barnes was called "Hem" and his disreputable consorts are traceable to Hemingway's own disreputable consorts of the time. Unfortunately, all three biographers, when it suits them, have taken this as a licence to ascribe to Hemingway certain experiences given to his fictional characters. Both Griffin and Meyers quote the passage from *A Farewell to Arms* beginning "I felt myself rush bodily out of myself . . .", in which Frederic Henry describes being blown up, as if it had happened to Hemingway himself, without proper footnote or explanation. Meyers, in a paragraph beginning "Hemingway's earliest memory . . .", quotes a passage from "Now I Lay Me" in

which Nick Adams is describing his first memory. He also uses incidents from the short stories to illustrate the state of relations between Hemingway and Hadley at the time the stories were written.

If this method happened to be in need of repudiation, Hemingway himself provided it in an interview he gave to the *Paris Review* much later. Asked if his characters were derived without exception from real life, he replied: "Of course they are not. Some come from real life. Mostly you invent people from a knowledge and understanding and experience of people."

In that first story in *In Our Time*, "Indian Camp", he could be said to be writing about the future as well as his experience of the past. In the story, the doctor and his son (and Uncle George, another real name) attend an Indian woman in labour; while they are delivering the baby her husband commits suicide, because "he couldn't stand things", as Nick's father says. In a singularly depressing statistic, Michael Reynolds notes that two, probably three, of the Hemingway children took their own lives, in addition to Ernest, following their father and Hadley's father, and foreshadowing Hemingway's last love, Adrienne Ivanchich. In 1921, Hadley, recognizing the in-built Hemingway tendency to chaos, wrote: "Maybe your work calls for another wreckage [sic] but you're not going to get it from me." He did, though, that one and many more.

## Salacity of a post-feminist

Anne Haverty

FIONA PITT-KETHLEY  
Sky Ray Lolly  
64pp. Chatto and Windus. £3.95.  
07011 30466

Fiona Pitt-Kethley is a phenomenon thrown up by post-feminist times. She carries none of the old feminist burdens — the hopes for the future, the social concern — and she has seized with gusto a new freedom to be as bad and sexist and egotistical as she wants. She is provocatively cynical. She writes, copiously, about sex, not love. She knows all about men and about life, which she views largely as a badly-edited blue movie enlivened by dirty jokes. All this is easy to confuse with a pre-feminist position: school-days were the best days, it's tough being a woman, men only want you for sex, and they have bits "like sets of giblets from a butcher's shop / Two kidneys with a chicken-neck on top".

A typical Pitt-Kethley poem begins in a desultory anecdotal manner — "At Kew, the keepers let us take windfalls" — and continues in an often meandering narrative before ending on a non-sequitur a long way from where it began. The ending often falls flat, blatantly so in the technically awful title poem, lazily in the rather better "Thoughts After a Burglary" where memories of her father are reduced to "What's left? A strong enduring influence . . .". Poems like "Old Extras" and "What Comes Next" where the voice is free of the pervasive note of self-approval are the

more successful. In these, a quality of understatement gets through.

The tone is often seriously unbalanced. In "Men", "Ties", "Paying for Sex", it's abusive, hectoring, a tone difficult for poetry to accommodate. Pitt-Kethley seems much of the time to be playing to an invisible gallery of giggling pals, and to be fictionalizing her experiences to rather crude effect. She specializes in sentiment-bashing. In "Kids", for example, "Out come 9 little bastards, staying next door / A commercial for abortions". "Country Walk" is very representative, displaying neatly her childishly scatological sense of humour — "I put up my camera to take a picture of a nest / and the birds said 'God damn that voyeur, / let's crap on her lenses'". Her cherry trees are "Andrex coloured", she's fascinated by the jade object that's "an old arsehole stopper from a corpse". These poems have a determined novelty, and a paradoxical staleness that comes from the flatness of their language. Their impact, beyond an initial shock-value, is slight, because their perspective is banal and their form generally rudimentary.

Pitt-Kethley has the attitude of a snail-paced schoolgirl who has been peering voyeuristically at the fumbings of adults, especially male adults. This makes her poems readable and easy to grasp, but endemically immature, simplistic and necessarily superior to all costs. Their interest for many people may be that this raucous, reductionist voice is a female one. There have been, and will be some partisan hip hips for Fiona Pitt-Kethley, but the hurrahs have little to do with the merit of her poems.

## Obsessed by gardens

Nicholas Jenkins

JOHN LEHMANN  
New and Selected Poems  
82pp. Enitharmon. £8.50 (paperback, £4.95).  
0905289 196

"I am making a bonfire in my own life . . . and resolve to throw on it all the dead rubbish of a career that is over." So said John Lehmann in 1965, receding from nearly four decades during which, as an editor, publisher, critic, literary impresario and just friend-to-many, he had been one of the arbiters and patrons of British culture. Much creative work of the period found a responsive audience simply because Lehmann was on hand with the taste and generosity to recognize good new writing of a particular kind, and with the organizational energy to back it. The results are an incalculable contribution to literary history.

Yet to the bours between these campaigns a more tentative man was visible. Lehmann, as a natural consequence of his commitment to literature, cherished literary ambitions. Indeed, for a while during the 1930s he was considered one of the most promising young poets. His early verse often seems, after some hesitation, to collude with that estimate:

Turned his desire from green and flowered growth  
To rocky dark, and long before he died;  
A lonely miner, worked new ores of death.

Although, of course, Lehmann's creative reputation at first strengthened his editorial authority, it also meant a life of competing public and private alarms. He has described it as a "fertile dilemma", and certainly each activity provided compensations for the disappointments of the other: However, these tensions were also the cause of an archetypal division, one which exacerbated a kind of self-consciousness common at that time. In the middle of the low dlanonest decade the pseudo-Communist Critic was judging the Bourgeois Poet with almost wistful alienation: "his work has shown an increasing preoccupation with, and sympathy for, the revolution, though he has some way to go before he has solved the problems of presentation which this involves for his poetry." So much was true. The headmasterly Censor was, in new disguises, to become increasingly powerful.

Lehmann's poetic impulse disappeared for a while. It was only after a mid-war crisis recorded in his prose poems "Vigils" that he

began to write again. Despite the Arnoldian paeans to Art that studied his essays, the poems were, for the duration, an understandable blend of the dreamlike and the baffled, held together by a sort of fond stoicism: "I was left alone to meet / . . . The dark Lieutenant from the sea". His new sense of poetry as a theatre of mytical conciliations, of "many meanings implied in one", dictated fidelity to the "music of [the poet's] unique inspiration". The items that survive this test are, by and large, innocuous, queasily restrained things.

*New and Selected Poems* is two volumes in one: an entire, and alight, book in fact published ten years ago in Canada, plus a rather fastidious garnering of previous work. The selection does demonstrate the range of Lehmann's settings (from Surrey to Greece), but there is a certain evenness of tone. Judging them "inappropriate" to the context, Lehmann has not included here any of his prose poems. Since this will be, for many readers, a first encounter with his writing, that seems a pity: they are more dramatic and pungent than the numb quatrains he habitually turns. Part of the problem is that the iambic strumming and the box-stanzas do not have a real expressive purpose, nor even, in contrast with their amenable contents, an ironic perfection:

Yes, Jasper was a Thug, that's plain, and he  
Killed his beloved nephew in just the way  
Prescribed by Kali for a devotee —  
The black scarf for the strangling, thrown away

The golden tie-pin and the golden watch. . . .

Lehmann's imagination is obsessed by figurative and literal gardens. In the course of this book they gradually take a modern form as drowsy sites for children and old people. The most poignant section of this *Selected* is an eulogium, "The House", in which an at times Eliot-like speaker mnagea to confront his childhood memories of willowy contentment in a grand country home with later knowledge about the sources of that security. The poem ends with an oracular surge as The Gardener (played by Eternity) circles the grounds prophesying continuity for the spot, but obliteration of "the runes of love". There is a deeper, more troubling process of effacement in many other poems. The final piece is an ever more cryptic epistle to Lehmann's friends, which eventually sinks into a line of dots and silence. Perhaps as a whole, the book will be most appreciated by those who know what lies behind it all.

## Strikingly direct

Simon Rae

LAURIS EDMOND  
Selected Poems  
128pp. Oxford University Press. £10.95.  
0195581261

Lauris Edmond is now established as one of New Zealand's leading poets. Born in 1924, she came to poetry relatively late in life, which must account for the retrospective slant of much of her poetry, and the theme of bereavement that recurs throughout these *Selected Poems*. One of the earliest poems, from her first collection, *In Middle Air*, is "Before a Funeral", a quietly understated account of what is left behind after a death: "your room is now nothing / but things, and tidy, / I have put away your life."

"Tidy", there, is a self-reproaching, mutedly angry word. Life is only tidy when it is over — or when it is dedicated to a principle larger than the individual's chaotic concerns. Forty pages later, in "Prague 1977", Edmond contrasts her private pursuit of a personal muse with the political commitment of an admired Czech counterpart. "We write you understand because we must", he tells her, while she comments, "his clean code would consider talk of / loneliness untidy . . .".

In response to the erratic variousness of that personal life of emotions and relationships, Edmond writes a spare, colloquial poetry with few formal constraints. Her poems have the immediacy of dirty jottings; one starts, "Rain at evening: the ghostly outlines of ruin". Another pulls the reader in with a conversational, "Let me tell you of my cut". Many, especially among the new poems, begin candidly with "I": "I sat up late those years / stitching small girls' dresses"; "I remember the rain"; "I want to go to America"; "I have a

dream of bicycles . . .".

The danger of this kind of poetry is of slackness or prosiness creeping in, of the language working under too little pressure. By and large, Lauris Edmond avoids the pitfall (though her line-breaks can seem disturbingly arbitrary). Not that she is completely set on free forms. "Femine Agée", a sonnet from the collection *Catching It*, and one of a number of poems written during a year spent in Meiton, shows her using rhyme with unabashed adeptness:

that trembling jaw,  
my clumsy step supported by a stick,  
the veined old hand that grips it like a clow  
— no man could so possess me, nor so mock.  
Was this life the poet my faithless body made?  
Only a woman can be so betrayed.

Here she is imagining the thoughts of someone else, but the hallmark of the book is a striking directness. "I only know that we have come / to quarrelling" comes off the page as a shaft of painful honesty — an effect repeated again and again, enhanced on occasion by a heightening of language, or a rare use of metaphor: "Death's an explosion in the mine / of love"; "the whole world sitting / bending over the great aching cloudfout / of its sorrow".

"So slight, so intermittent / is the life we know, to speak of 'order' / is mere optimism and 'natural law' simply / the daily terror in disguise". Edmond writes in one of the last poems in the book, "The Telephone May Ring at Any Moment". Without either tearing her hair out or falling into maudlin self-pity, she makes her readers aware of the daily terror, and of the quiet and courageous determination needed to surmount it. Loss, leave-taking and regret, for Edmond, are our inheritance, relieved, when we are fortunate, by love and the sustaining warmth of human sympathy.

## Avoiding deep waters

Tim Dooley

C. B. COX  
Two-Headed Monster  
62pp. Maarchester: Carcanet. £4.95.  
085635 6182

C. B. Cox is better known as a university teacher and educational controversialist than a poet. *Two-Headed Monster*, a volume of new and selected poems, is slightly more interesting, however, than the occasional verse of a professional academic and semi-public figure might be expected to be. His best poems put one in mind of Donald Davie writing just below par or Charles Tomlinson on an unusually dull day. The verse is metrically interesting — Cox is particularly successful at anglicizing William Carlos Williams's triadic foot. His diction is unexciting, however, and his attempts at metaphor often weakly conventional:

Sudden whistle of bombs  
makes me cringe  
like a wild thing in an open sack

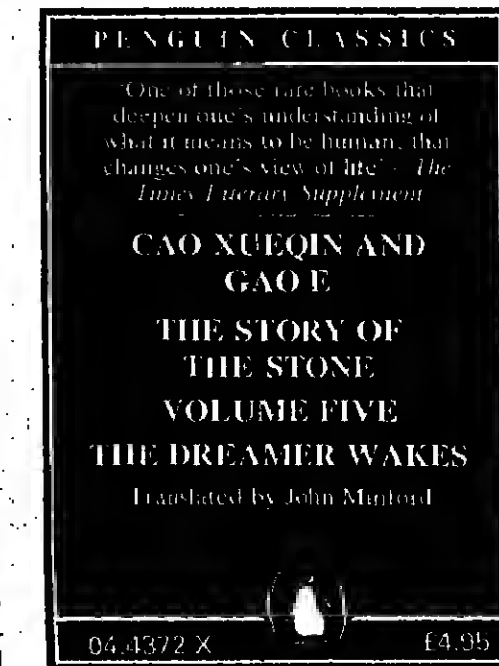
War-time experience, political and educational debate, marriage, travel in India, the United States and Western Europe provide Cox with his subject matter, to which he brings an independent intelligence and a guarded frankness about his personal feelings. The "eringeing" movement alluded to in "Child in an Air Raid" comes to seem a typical feature of the character the poems reveal. So, in "After the War", Cox pleases himself himself bicycling away from a French farmhouse "In my yellow cape . . . nutterfly, / too fragile" for the hopes his host wishes to place on the shoulders of "the new generation / for which his friends had died". In "LSD" a hippy student "sits too close, his beads swinging against my tie".

Distaste for antihumanism, terror of licence and suspicion of apparent innocence inform some effective debunking of Le Corbusier's model city of Chandigarh ("Nek Chand") and Rousseau's influence on progressive schooling ("Foundlings"), while leaving the Prime Minister "an objet d'art (three star)", untouched by any glance of irony. In "Anniversary" — perhaps his most individual and successful

when the Dutch boy  
puts mouth to breast,  
touches a crotch,  
his girl crouched blank-eyed on the sand,  
I'm distressed,  
I feel a loss  
as if words fell out of language . . .

He confronts his squeamishness honestly, and contrasts the scenes which have provoked it with moving and almost convincing images of restraint. A modest group of schoolgirls embarrasses the semi-naked revellers enough to move them further up the beach while Cox and his wife enjoy a more distanced perspective both of the shore and their own lives:

we've spent so many years  
with ropes and toggles and floats  
making a world safe for children.  
We swim far out beyond the raft:  
. . . at this vantage point  
we command perfect landscape.  
Distant from the curving beach,  
blue hills of Le Lavandou,  
we are treading deep waters.



## On the shadow side

Brian Morton

JOHN W. CROWLEY  
The Black Heart's Truth: The early career of William Dean Howells  
160pp. University of North Carolina Press.  
\$20.  
08478 16329  
EDWIN H. CADY  
Young Howells and John Brown: Episodes in a radical education  
104pp. Ohio State University Press. \$16.  
08142 03884

In 1930, Sinclair Lewis became the first American to win the Nobel Prize for literature. Lewis used his acceptance speech to launch a harsh attack on William Dean Howells, "a pious old maid whose greatest delight was to have ten at the vicarage". Howells had died exactly a decade earlier, and his reputation had been in rapid decline ever since.

Edith Wharton, though, quickly came to his defence, reminding Lewis that without Howells's pioneering example none of their work would have been possible. Howells's *A Modern Instance*, "though so long before your time that you are probably unconscious of it", was a direct forerunner of Lewis's *Main Street*. Lewis hugged his "subversiveness" so close that he was largely unconscious of how sympathetically he identified with those of his own characters — George Babbitt, Carol Kennicott — whom he sought to deride; he shared with later critics an inability to see beneath Howells's stolid exterior or read beneath the even prose to the turmoil.

John W. Crowley's contention is that Howells himself only gradually learned the extent to which writing dredged up unpalatable truths about the self, but that when he did, in the midst of writing *A Modern Instance*, the effects were catastrophic. It is a commonplace that Howells's work is more susceptible than most to biographical explanations. His early career was blighted by a series of psychosomatic crises ranging from acute hypochondria to suicidal panic; and it is well known that Howells underwent a major breakdown during the composition of *A Modern Instance*, marked in the text by the crisis in Bartley Hubbard's and Maria Gaylord's marriage. The latter half of the novel, containing the notorious divorce chapters, is curiously schematic, and emotionally laboured, and past critics have seen this as another example of Howells's failure to work through his narrative premises. Professor Crowley suggests that this book's structural crisis is the direct corollary of Howells's sudden recognition of his own com-

plexity in the selfish fantasies of his male protagonist (who significantly leaves the stage almost entirely at this point, on the run from his marriage).

In earlier books like the relatively innocuous *Their Wedding Journey* (1872) and *A Chance Acquaintance* (1873), Howells had managed to submerge his complex sexual feelings beneath a layer of cool narrative control, an insistently ironic tone. Wharton's remarks about unconscious debt help to suggest the extent to which Howells was himself unaware of his own chaste intentions — later readers may only have picked them up in obscurely coded signals. He has long seemed an ambivalent figure and only those critics amenable, as Crowley is, to psychological and psychoanalytic explanations have come close to a satisfactory analysis; Frederick J. Hoffman once followed a reference to the novelist's "serene assurance" with the apparently contradictory epithet "disturbed Howells".

That he himself became aware of such contradictions may help to explain the extraordinary development — as dramatic as a therapeutic breakthrough — in his work. Later

## Love-songs in age

Lachlan Mackinnon

MARILYN KALLET  
Honest Simplicity in William Carlos Williams:  
"Asphodel, That Greeny Flower"  
163pp. Louisiana State University Press.  
£17.50.  
08071 12267

The blurb to William Carlos Williams's *Pictures from Brueghel* (1962) quotes Auden as calling "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower" "one of the most beautiful love poems in the language", a remark usefully correlated with that quoted in Stephen Spender's *Journals*. Auden's wish for an idiom in which he could write "love's limber flame". His admiration for Williams's late, profoundly moving love poem addressed to his wife and recapitulating memories of much of a lifetime may have been caused by the way in which it does break out of the poetic diction of modernism into a language more openly rhapsodic and sentimental. Marilyn Kallet observes more closely of its language that long vowel sounds are "usually softened by short vowel sounds in the same phrases", and argues that the frequent feminine endings are unlike the masculine ones of *Lycida* or parts of *The Prelude* because they

age is not one that supports the idea of the immortality of spirit, art, or mind. Milton had religion to support his long 'a' sounds; Wordsworth had nature. Williams has only his love, and his song."

Footnotes take us to the Norton anthology for both older poets, and Professor Kallet's often chatty generalizing tone is at moments jarring, as when after a shrewd account of manuscript variants and their relation to Williams's marriage she exclaims "Crafty Odysseus!" She can make us feel like passive, dim students who demand relevance in all costs, even that of historical likelihood. Her view of Williams as a shaman also needs more support than it gets. It is therefore remarkable how successfully her matter-breaks through her manner. She gives an unusually attentive account of the workings of the triadic line; and admits that for Williams, "Measure is count, bent, rhythmic pace, freedom and order, a way of gauging, a way of knowing, discipline, discovery." She is alert to the confusions of his thought while sympathetic to it, as shown most clearly by her description of the recordings Williams made of the poem and how they differ, looking at the variations with regard both to literary and to medical evidence.

The shuffling between critical and biographical approaches gives this book an un-

usual value. The procedure is risky, and at times Kallet seems to imply that the poem's worth is owed to its biographical circumstances; a queasy way of defending it. This is only occasional, though, and is outweighed by the range of material encompassed by this slim book. We are offered a view of Williams's earlier career which is exemplarily clear and certain about his aims; a detailed reading of "Asphodel" itself that explains its structure as well as its prosody; an analysis of the important presences of Homer and Virgil in the poem; and Williams's bypassing of Pound in his reaching out for the ancients, and a rewarding examination of the manuscripts. When Williams started the poem, he thought he was writing Book Five of *Poems*, and Professor Kallet sensitively follows his gradual recognition of what he was doing. It would be easy to denigrate this book for its gushing and sometimes patronizingly didactic tone, but as an introduction to Williams's later poetry it offers much to think about and does due honour to the achievement it describes.

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## Leaving Jenkins

(extracts from the diary of a young schoolmaster in 1876)

### SUNDAY

As I had no timepiece, my own being not the menders, I got up late.

A typical Sunday: the Iron Church in the morning, Sunday School this afternoon (the boys unruly

both in Jenkins' class and in my own); a capital sermon this evening.

### TUESDAY

Tomorrow I shall have been on this earth for 21 years. I have resolved, with God's help,

to give a better account of myself within the next year, if spared. Walked to Finsbury Park with Jenkins.

Tonight I am reading Pepys' Diary. He seems a man utterly devoid of real, sound principles.

### WEDNESDAY

Received three letters on my birthday, from my mother, my father and Fred.

Took singing in the Senior Room while Mr Timpson examined my class in dictation.

Jenkins is suffering from indigestion. Went with him to Dr Hill, who charged him 1/6d. and told him nothing.

### THURSDAY

Went to look at the Great Eastern terminus. It is very tastily got up.

This evening, Mr Sherlock from upstairs brought down his galvanic battery,

vacuum tubes, microscope and organ accompaniment. Talked until 2 a.m. Other lodgers displeased.

### FRIDAY

To Beavis to be measured for a suit of summer clothes (55/-). Jenkins ordered a waistcoat.

At last made up my mind to see Henry Irving in *The Bells*. Felt better for it -

If all theatres were carried on like this, there would be little harm done.

### SUNDAY

The sermon this morning dealt with vicarious sacrifice: discussed with Jenkins.

Tonight, the Rev. Marmaduke Millar told us why he believed in angels; it was quite scientific.

So tired, I rode home in a public vehicle though I cannot think it right on a Sunday.

### SATURDAY

To the City to see the progress of the Metropolitan Railway.

My face was much swollen from the wind and the druggist gave me camomile flowers,

poppy heads and a black draught. Jenkins came round this evening and read to me.

### SUNDAY

I am accepting the post at Woodhurst School at £80 plus £5 as Clerk of the Board.

Jenkins is sorry that I am going. I believe I have done him good:

I have tried to instil in him a taste for literature, and he has taken

to the Popular Educator; but he wonders what he will do when I have gone.

### CONNIE BENSLEY

## Pick-Me-Up (Grand Buveur VII)

A dream inspired by reality,

In his seat by the window

Of the pub which is the throne of so many;

A dream inspired by swallowing,

By swallowing and breathing a special air

Made of grey, and tumbling.

The Brides of Cornwall in their rough-hewn temples,

Their rude granite rooflessness,

Stone pillars, moonbeam rafters,

And the moth doors of long grasses,

The ceiling of fire-flecked soot which is the sky,

And stars on her breast

Of such a one, initiate's stony breath, the gulls

Swarm over the fishing-bont returning

With their oily eath, fluttering

Like stars on her breath . . .

Thus a Fall Graduate of Whisky

Visiting Falmouth for a tavern pick-up, the pigeons

Dab-dabbing around with their big leaning breasts

Like old ship figureheads. She fills

The pewter mug, the soft foam rises

Pouting like the breast of a dove,

The bubbles cooing a round astonished sound,

Turning crisp pounds to sparkling urine.

Intoxicated by the ceiling of stars,

The violin-brown concert of beer,

Lungs kippered dry with smokes,

Coughing like a choppy sea,

Crisp-plissing out the pound notes;

The white chrysalids of tobacco

Passing through the fire to unwrap themselves,

He ascends on dove-grey pinions

To the sea-breezes out of the carriage window.

PETER REDGROVE

# Letters

## 'The Minister and the Massacres'

Sir, - It is difficult to take Nikolai Tolstoy's tone of injured outrage (Letters, July 25) altogether seriously but I will try. Before setting out on yet another long march through his errors let me at least give thanks for the progress already made. A large number of the points I made in my original review (which, admittedly, only covered a fraction of his book's weaknesses) have now apparently been (tacitly) accepted. Unfortunately for your readers, however, Tolstoy's Law requires that the length of a letter (or book) varies in inverse proportion to the number and strength of the arguments it puts forward.

I cited Tolstoy's reference to the Germans as the Slovenes' "formidable protectors" to support my contention that his "historical understanding" of Yugoslavia's wartime experience was "deeply flawed". The paragraph dealing with Nazi persecution of the Slovenes, which he now cites, is followed by this sentence: "With the outbreak of the war between Germany and the Soviet Union, a new and horrific dimension was added to the sufferings of the Slovenian population as the Communist Liberation Front launched its own civil war with the province" (my emphasis). Then come four pages about the "straightforward terrorism" of the partisans. This seems to me flawed enough - whether it implies sympathy with the German occupation or not. As far as Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union is concerned the dominant note is one of disappointment at a missed opportunity: "Had Hitler not been entirely obsessed with theories of racial inferiority and the policy of blind destruction of the stronghold of Jewish Bolshevism", he could very possibly by the end of 1941 have converted this war on the Eastern Front into a Russian Civil War" (p 370). Though I am not clear why Hitler's obsessions should have upset the Cossacks, whose "Ataman", Peter Krasnov, attacked General Vlasov for "selling Russia to the Jews", the implications of this argument are apologetic. They are drawn out even more clearly in Tolstoy's introduction to Neulen's book *Die Deutsche Seite*, which is concerned to defend those who fought decently ("anständig") with the Germans and which cites Harold Macmillan's alleged support for a (non-existent) British alliance with Hitler in part justification.

Tolstoy both whitewashes and romanticizes the Cossacks. His own reference in an earlier work to "rape and rough handling" [sic] clinches the point. My seven-word reference to Cossack help in suppressing the Warsaw Uprising now merits four paragraphs of speculation and obfuscation. The reference I gave in my last letter (J. Mackiewicz, *Tragedy of the East*, pp 121-2) states that Domanov's *Kazniti Stan* left Nowogrodek early in July 1944 but was only given permission by Globocnik to settle in northern Italy in September. The Warsaw Uprising began on August 1, at which point the "Stan" was in a temporary camp at Zdunska-Wola. No ballistic missiles were therefore necessary. It is a striking example of Tolstoy's lack of interest in what the Cossacks did between 1941 and 1945 (that he is apparently not aware of this. However, since the Cossack role was, admittedly, fairly minor (according to Mackiewicz, limited to an "unbedeutende Abteilung unter Führung von Oberst Bondarenko") I am quite prepared to "quietly drop" the point. In return, perhaps Tolstoy could "quietly raise" the Cossacks' depredations in France and Italy, which I carelessly failed to mention in my original review.

Let me now try another crossing of the Keightley-Scott swamp, chewing over details as I go. Keightley's attitude before Macmillan's arrival on May 13 is clearly central to Tolstoy's argument that the Minister-Resident's visit was a crucial turning-point. He therefore has a duty to the reader to present fairly the partly conflicting evidence. This he manifestly fails to do. Scott's account, written in 1946, is paraphrased as *la* Tolstoy, while Keightley's readiness to surrender Yugoslav groups to Tito is tucked away without a clear indication that it came before Macmillan's visit (p 100). This approach to evidence, and Tolstoy's persistence in none the less referring to "facts", are what "excites" me.

On the question of Macmillan's knowledge before his arrival in Klagenfurt, Tolstoy piles confusion on confusion. The dispatch he quotes of July 27, 1944, does not apparently refer to the Cossacks at all. It can certainly not have been written in the context of a Yalta Conference which at that stage had not yet even been planned. As far as the post-Yalta discussion is concerned, Tolstoy has hitherto argued that Macmillan arrived in Klagenfurt with instructions to exclude *émigré* Cossacks, a knowledge of their existence in British hands and of the Soviet request for their leading officers. In his letter he now argues that the *émigrés* could not have been explicitly excluded since neither the Foreign Office nor Allied Forces Headquarters had any knowledge that they were in British hands when Macmillan left AFHQ on May 12. But - unless and until Tolstoy can produce some evidence to show that Macmillan was told about the Cossacks after leaving AFHQ but before arriving at Klagenfurt - this simply strengthens my argument that he was confronted in Klagenfurt with the Cossack question without warning, along with many other urgent problems. It might none the less be argued that Macmillan was remiss in not exploring the question of nationality of all of those concerned, but since the *émigré* Cossacks had not been the subject of any particular discussion this failure is at least understandable. And, if my argument is correct, Macmillan was probably not informed about the Soviet request by 5th Corps at all. His failure to refer to it in subsequent telegrams does not therefore need to be explained. On the other hand, the fact that in the two-and-a-half days preceding Macmillan's visit, 5th Corps had made no mention of the Soviet request surely requires a more convincing explanation than that so far given by Tolstoy.

I am familiar with the British interventions on behalf of *émigré* Cossacks referred to in Tolstoy's second letter. But my point was that the *motif* of those officers concerned was not primarily legal. They would evidently have stopped the Soviet Cossacks being sent back if they could have done so. This point was made to show that my picture of the British military was not "appalling", as Tolstoy alleges, and that legal questions weighed less heavily in Carinthia in 1945 than they do in Berkshire in 1986. The fact that Murray warned the German officers to "escape is not", "inconvenient evidence" for my interpretation. What is inconvenient - for Tolstoy's theory - is that Murray did not protest to Keightley that the terms of Yalta were being breached and that Keightley, then, though allegedly "fearful" of his "conspiracy" being discovered, referred quite openly in written instructions to the hand-over of the German officers.

The argument that the hand-overs involved a "severe risk" to British soldiers is an interesting one, which might carry more weight if Tolstoy had thought it worth making in his book. There (p 236), by contrast, he merely states that on May 26 Musson "informed [his battalion commanders] that the Cossacks were to be sent home. To guard against the danger of disorder in the camp, the officers were to be separated from the rest of the camp by means of the 'deception tactic'." But now, in order to demonstrate that political considerations outweighed military prudence, Tolstoy argues that the hand-overs were much more dangerous. Yet the Soviet Cossacks were unlikely to have volunteered to return while the *émigrés* were being retained, and therefore any individual screening operation would surely have been much more "risky" than a wholesale hand-over. But screening, unlike the hand-overs, Tolstoy asserts, "represented a perfectly straightforward operation". This is puzzling.

Finally, let me turn to Tolstoy's scurrilous methods of argument. It is time he accepted that not everyone who concludes that his book is not worth reading is part of an establishment cover-up or a communist plot (or both). Last October, having come across some new evidence on the hand-overs, I criticized his work. On that occasion he conceded, with a gracious "mea culpa", that he had indeed made a number of serious errors and referred to his past two works on the subject as "rather ephemeral". In spite of surreptitiously recording this sentiment he managed to give a garbled version of it in his book. At the Brdo Colloquium, which M. C. Wheeler has described (Letters, July 11), I presented a revised version of this

paper, omitting virtually all reference to Tolstoy's work, as being of little interest in those present. Both this paper and my review of Tolstoy's book make it clear that I have no particular axe to grind in behalf of what Tolstoy calls the Yugoslav Communist authorities (are there any others?). More disturbing than these details is Tolstoy's preference for sneering critics rather than rebutting criticism. It is an unpleasant technique, which makes debate difficult if not impossible. It is also liable to boomerang. What conclusions might it yield, for example, when applied to the fact that last year Tolstoy's German publishers prominently advertised a translation of his *Victims of Yalta* in the non-Nazi magazine *Report*?

ROBERT KNIGHT,  
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## Ernest Bramah

Sir, - The British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books lists Ernest Bramah's first book as *English Farming and Why I Turned It Up* (Londenhall Press, London, 1894): "Up" and not, as Adrian Ronni contents (Letters, July 4), "In".

"Bramah" may be a good old English name, but it is still rather more exotic (in the way of the Kal Ling stories) than "Smith". I was aware that Brahmin is the name of a Hindu deity.

D. J. ENRIGHT,  
35a Vicfield Road, London SW18.

## Jesus' Genealogy

Sir, - In his article "Narrating the nation" (June 13) Benedict Anderson states that "in the long genealogy of Jesus which opens the Gospel according to Saint Matthew females are wholly excluded". But in verse 5 Ruth is specifically and crucially mentioned, and in verse 6 David begat Solomon "of her who was Uriah's".

EDWARD ULLENDORFF,  
4 Bladon Close, Oxford.

## 'Ritchie's Rabbit'

Sir, - I have just come across Gwyneth Williams' review of my *Ritchie's Rabbit* (June 6). She doesn't much like the book and, obviously, she is entitled not to like it. But she is certainly not entitled, as a reviewer, to propagate quite arbitrary assumptions about it - as she does in saying that Ritchie is a child of separated parents, living with his mother and visiting his father. This is nowhere either said or implied. All that happens, as does sometimes happen in certain households, is that Ritchie's father picks him up from playgroup, and gives him lunch and does the dishes, before attending to his squashed pastry rabbit. No more and no less. Perhaps Gwyneth Williams was more concerned with her own special preconception - stories for children "with an adult purpose" etc - than with the actual content of the book.

ADÈLE GERAS,  
10 Danesmoor Road, Manchester.

## 'The Thistle and the Bee'

Sir, - I am not entirely familiar with the job description and working conditions of the Laureateship, but surely it must now be high time for Ted Hughes to be given the firkin of sack?

BRIAN HAMMOND,  
38 Harmon House, Bowditch, London SE8.

## 'As I Was Saying'

Sir, - It is nice to find the TLS giving space - however belatedly - to a review (July 18) of C. H. Rolph's excellent *As I Was Saying*. But Laurie Taylor can be reassured. Despite his worries that Mr Rolph's "humane and intelligent pieces" are no longer part of the weekly diet for our police force (why not the more accurate "police service"?), his articles do in fact continue to provide stimulus and instruction each week in the *Police Review*, as they have done for so many years.

K. A. L. PARKER,  
18, Lichfield Road, Kew Gardens, Richmond, Surrey.

## Basil Bunting and Religious Orthodoxy

Sir, - Basil Bunting's poem *Briggflatts* borrows an angel out of Firdausi, awaiting the command to signal the end of the world. From this, Donald Davie (May 23) infers Bunting's belief in a God, like the God of Islam in that he is external to his creation, and capable of ending it; but not like the God of Islam in any other way. (For the rest, it seems, Bunting's God is the orthodox Catholic-Quaker-Muslim God of the modern liberal.) This is either too specific or not specific enough.

In earlier verse Bunting repeatedly horrified, from *Inferno* 8-9, Dante's terrifying angel sent down into hell to clear the way for the two Poets into the City of Dis. From this we are to infer - how much? That Bunting believed in hell? Or in a Catholic God? Or in a personal God?

Whatever religious feelings lurk in the plots of Bunting's verses are of a kind not so easily transferable into the terms of theology.

If we turn to the prose, there seems no doubt whatever as to Professor Davie's central assertion, that Bunting was a Quaker. He professed himself so, most notably in a BBC interview with Eric Mottram broadcast on March 7, 1975. But he had doubts as to whether his Quakerism would be accepted by the Friends, for his view was, he said elsewhere, "an extremely pantheistic one". Pantheism: all that is, is God. Neither a God with arms and legs, nor God the Designer, nor God as a number of nymphs inhabiting the bushes. Nevertheless, God; for Bunting there existed a kind of reverence for the whole creation which I feel we all ought to have in our bones if we don't, a kind of pantheism, I suppose. If the word "God" is to have any use it must include everything.

This makes it a little difficult to follow the terms of Richard Caddel (Letters, June 20), where, to reinforce his argument that Bunting's God was not very Islamic or Christian, he says that the poet's spiritual experience was "tinged with pantheism (some would suggest atheism)". Pantheism is a flat contradiction of atheism.

And if we eliminate a personal, external God, it by no means follows that we transfer to ourselves the reverence or domination we formerly allowed him, if (I am not sure) that is what Richard Caddel means by "that which was God's is ours". According to Bunting Swift didn't admire the species man and neither do I - the Renaissance came along and substituted man for God at the centre of things. If you do that, Swift's pessimism is inevitable. The universe is very large and in it man is no more important than animals or trees.

Pantheism is pantheism: not humanism, not scepticism, not atheism.

To find out about the poet's religious feelings, we turn to his prose. Is the question so easily resolved? Then, to find out what really went on in the crannies of Hemingway's heart, we turn to his self-serving prose statements of his eras; to judge the real tone and inner sense of *The Waste Land*, we turn to the poet's essays on Dante; to guess the weight of Wordsworth's religious passions, we stay within the easier, more prosaic patches of the *Prelude*, or, safer still, between the boards of Owen and Smyser's edition of the Prose. The verse thus becomes unnecessary.

It seems to me, however, that the verse is likely to contain something more complex than these prose "bejells". In any case, the real question is not "What were the religious beliefs of the author of *Briggflatts*?" but "What religious sense, or feeling, or awareness, is contained within the poem?" If we can't find any, we are not likely to remedy the defect by looking elsewhere. For that reason, as Bunting would certainly have said, the most relevant arguments adduced by Donald Davie and Richard Caddel are their quotations from *Briggflatts*:

Finest, fairest things: stars, free of our humping, each his own, the longer known the more alone . . .

- and not because of their prose sense, either.

PETER MAKIN,  
Kanai University, Suita, Osaka, Japan.

A note on David Bolt's *Author's Handbook* (July 4) incorrectly described him as a 'former literary agent'; his agency is, in fact, still extremely active.



## COMMENTARY

## Comic cut-outs

Philip Brady

FRANZ WERFEL.  
Jacobowsky and the Colonel  
English version by S. N. Behrman  
Olivier Theatre

Since the days when his poems left Kafka with a head "full of steam", Franz Werfel has had a mixed reception. He changed style and direction: Expressionist fiction (the cause of Kafka's steam) gave way to more controlled writing and - in American exile - to best-selling novels; but he became, and has remained, a shadowy, peripheral figure in the Austro-German literary landscape, seldom taken seriously. There is a final irony in the fact that a fellow-dramatist, the American S. N. Behrman, made Werfel's last play, *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, into a success precisely by declining to take it too seriously.

Werfel has set a potentially comic encounter between pragmatism and high principle - between the ever-resolute, life-saving Polish Jew, Jacobowsky, and the stiff-necked Polish aristocrat, Stjerbinsky - in an atomic place and time, France, 1940. He was attempting a balance between a background of war and a foreground quartet of would-be survivors who, in outline at least, come close to stock comedy:

## On the inner journey

Robert Snell

Dreams of a Summer Night: Scandinavian painting at the turn of the century  
Hayward Gallery, until October 5

Facing each other across a corner of the large downstairs gallery at the Hayward are two pictures of the mid-1890s, Halvdan Egedius's "The Dreamer" and Veggo Johansen's "A Summer's Night". Like almost everything else in this carefully considered and balanced show, the juxtaposition is not fortuitous: it focuses our attention on the exhibition's major and insistent themes. "A Summer's Night" is an empty Danish landscape, populated only by a few drowsy sheep; it contains no incident; its centre is somehow vacant. Similarly, we are given no clues as to what Egedius's dreamer is dreaming about; he is, perhaps, pondering his aloneness, as many of the landscape paintings in the exhibition invite us to do. A third picture in this focal corner group, Egedius's "Girls Daencing", suggests that the dreamer's thoughts may have another dimension. In a dark interior, two dancing figures, features barely defined, stand out against a huddled and faceless crowd; beyond a window in the background is a glimpse of another bright, empty landscape. The dreamer, and the painter, are pondering not only their aloneness in the face of nature, but also the mysterious nature of human contact.

Something sinister keeps threatening to surface from the profundities of these meditations in paint. Edvard Munch's "Moonlight" is the first picture one sees upon entering, with its looming, irrational shadow and unnerving tension between inside and outside. The metaphor of the interior is used to disturbing effect in Vilhelm Hammershøi's "Five Portraits", while August Strindberg's "Lonely Poisonous Mushroom" provides the ultimate image of the solitary inner journey gone wrong. Yet what finally prevails in this exhibition is not so much Strindbergian or Bergmanesque anguish, as a sense of the shared seriousness and integrity of purpose of these painters from five countries, each of which was in the process of discovering, or redefining, its own nationhood. The viewer is surrounded by figures who maintain a quiet gravity, whether apparently idle or occupied with some task (Harriet Backer's or Hammershøi's genre scenes), or even (Einar Nielsen's "Sick Girl") on the verge of death. It is as if the painters were engaged in a pursuit of knowledge parallel to that being undertaken by Scandinavian historians and their contemporaries in the

the proud, irascible Colonel; the long-suffering little man, full of ruses; the warm-hearted young French woman, fond of them both; and - closest to type, but memorably brought to life by Ken Stott - the Colonel's dourly dependable orderly. Crucial to the balance is Jacobowsky himself, who can attend to present needs by providing, against all the odds, petrol and narrows glances while putting present alarms into historical perspective. Behrman's adaptation does not cancel out the tragic foundation but it tilts the play towards wise-cracking comedy.

The National Theatre production, directed by Jonathan Lynn, has a strong sense of place, aiming at that period authenticity which is fast becoming the Olivier house-style: large, naturalistic sets, ranging from a meticulously detailed Parisian laundry-room to a café accurate down to the stained glass and the faded Gitanes poster. The play itself, which needs this kind of attentive realism, hinges on the ups and downs of the relationship between Jacobowsky and Colonel Stjerbinsky, two temperaments - representing two histories - on collision-course. They share loneliness; otherwise they are opposites, so extreme as to risk appearing contrived. But Geoffrey Hutchings (Jacobowsky) and Nigel Hawthorne (Stjerbinsky) modulate the extremes. Hawthorne in particular suggests, from his first raised eyebrow a curiosity about Jacobowsky and then, between furious outbursts, growing more grudgingly dependent even as he grows more jealous. His accent, a virtuoso performance of sustained mispronunciation, is a perfect vehicle for explosions of impotent rage, and his silences are eloquent. If at times his head-high strutting borders on caricature it is kept within bounds by suggestions of bewilderment. Jacobowsky's strength is his coolness, his utter dependability, and Hutchings has created a dapper little man, hands forever in pockets, relishing his own tricks and ripostes, but vulnerable beneath all the aplomb. "Between us, we're a hero", Jacobowsky observes of their bizarre intimacy, and with these two the claim makes sense.

Werfel called his play "a comedy out of tragedy". There is a world at suffering, but when it is centre-stage the writing falters, as if neither Werfel nor Behrman, working from a safe distance, could bridge the gap to France in defeat. The opening scene, in a Parisian hotel, succeeds despite some over-deliberate introductory speech-making, because the danger can be sensed and the stage itself is occupied by a comic, contrasted mixture of panic and non-panic. But the Germans who later march into the café are cardboard to a man, and the final scene, as Jacobowsky and the Colonel are whisked across to England in the nick of time, while Marianne, stalwart patriot, stays behind, is close to 1940s Hollywood melodrama. The "comedy out of tragedy" works best when the tragedy is kept out of sight.

It is perhaps for this reason that painters from Scandinavia in the 1880s and 90s seem, by and large, to have been so successful in assimilating the lessons of contemporary French art where they needed them - of naturalism and symbolism - without allowing themselves to be overwhelmed by these powerful currents. Scandinavian art cannot be seen in isolation from these major European developments. Munch was not the only Scandinavian painter who spent significant parts of his working life abroad. Yet Scandinavian painting often drew just as heavily from an earlier, Northern European Romanticism, from the Danish Golden Age and from Friedrich and Runge, all of which also contributed to its character and emotional atmosphere.

Upstairs there is more conviviality. Larsson appears to be blowing art nouveau smoke-rings, and Bruno Liljefors's capercaillies are about to mate; Anders Zorn's rustic dancers rug shoulders with Akseli Gallen-Kallela's urgent reinventions of Finnish national mythology, and with symbolism (Hugo Simberg's "Wounded Angel") of a more overt and ponderous kind. Meanwhile, Eugène Jansson's large self-portrait is there to remind us that the roots of this Scandinavian renaissance lie in an insistence on contemplation as a serious mode of inquiry.

## Commonwealth writers

Blake Morrison

The most poignant contribution to last week's Commonwealth Writers' Conference in Edinburgh, part of a larger pre-Festival arts festival there to coincide with the Commonwealth Games, was not any speech or poem or manifesto but the row of empty seats set aside for "absent friends". The friends included Nigeria's Chinua Achebe, the exiled Kenyan Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, and India's Mulk Raj Anand, all of whom had pulled out in protest against the British government's policy over South Africa.

The sprightly eighty-year-old Indian, whose novel *Untouchable* was championed by E. M. Forster back in 1934, withdrew with some reluctance, declaring himself to be "a great supporter of the Commonwealth, unlike those cynics who say 'Nothing in common and no wealth'", adding, with less-than-gloaming wisdom, that Mrs Thatcher had "opened a Pandora's Box, and all sorts of snakes and devils have flown out". However, writers are not athletes; there were no block withdrawals, and the exercise of individual conscience produced participants as well as abstainers. Another Indian poet, Eunice de Souza, felt that "too much money has been invested in my coming here for me to sit around in cafés making gestures", and her ironic voice - "sourness" she calls it - was one of the weekend's highlights.

Most missed of all was Achebe, whose *Things Fall Apart* none the less provided the keynote of the conference. That the centre isn't holding was the theme not just of the political resolution drafted by diverse bands and eventually presented to Mrs Thatcher (it called for Britain to do the "logical and decent

thing" and withdraw from a Commonwealth which no longer respects her moral leadership) but of several seminars: "core" and "periphery" are changing places, it was argued, as black writing and women's writing and even (deconstructive) criticism take the place of "privileged" white male forms. Evidence for this was certainly present in some of the readings and performances. The greatest eloquence came from the Guyanese novelist Wilson Harris, the most authoritative poetry from self-confessed "barbarians" like Les Murray, the liveliest theatre from Caribbean poets John Agard and Lynford Fyfe.

Agard brilliantly acted out one poem in which a forward-defensive Prospero crumbles before the pace bowling of Caliban, and talk of slave/master, black/white relations was recurrent, threatening in its angrier moments to destroy the gentler multicultural aspirations of the conference. Welsh and Scottish writers were accused of fiddling with trivial issues of national identity while Soweto burns. Even discussion of women's literature (Margaret Atwood, Naomi Mitchison and Elizabeth Jolley were among those in attendance) was received with less than the usual hallowed respect.

"The Commonwealth is too important to be left to politicians", said Wilson Harris, who warned that an "illiteracy of the imagination" might bring it down. For anyone still listening after four days' saturation, the heartening message of this conference was that, whatever its precarious health, the Commonwealth is still held to be important by some of the finest writers in Africa, Australia, India and the Caribbean, whose talents and energies are among the factors that may help to keep it alive.

It is Paul Scofield's play, and he obviously relishes the challenge. Though neither his speech patterns nor his personality resembles those of the eighty-year-old New York Jewish socialist I happen to know best, he gives a flawless impersonation of a recognizable type, selfish but lovable, still nursing dreams of justice and equality. In deed, the audience, mainly well-heeled, bursts into spontaneous applause when the old Trotskyist eloquently defends the liberal virtues of heart, spirit and imagination against capitalist predators, young and old. They also applauded when Rollins pulls a knife on the cowboy pusher, moving with dignity towards what can only be his death. He took a beguiling and utterly natural occasion, straight man to Scofield's garrulous comedian, they play to each other with the clownish, self-mocking wit of the vaudeville teams they both remember so fondly.

It is all a pleasant exercise in wish-fulfillment, as winter closes in, and the bright lights of the city come on. Violent as the young hoods are, their victims do not die, but return on weekends only, in a Senior Citizens' club. This is hardly Beckett's grim view of old age, despite a few common elements; though Gardner does not put her dad in a home, but instead, after a long time, in a nursing home. Gardner's old men are half-blind and lame, they are not crawling towards death. Nor does Gardner share Arthur Miller's vision of the ruthless nature of American capitalism, and the dimensions of American narcissism and bigotry (no apartment house on Central Park West would have hired a black superintendent both or even ten years ago). Again there are common elements, softened and neutralized by Gardner's benevolent version of old men on the dust heap. He is aware of the pathology of the city, and allows his play to approach it, but at the first act ends with Midge crying out at the invisible passers-by (and the audience) "Help!" over the prostrate body of his friend. But five minutes into the second act, we know the menace is not real, not tonight, anyway.

## With the blunt end

Judith Chernaik

HERB GARDNER  
I'm Not Rappaport  
Apullo Theatre

Herb Gardner's *I'm Not Rappaport* is certainly the most amiable play about old age, father-daughter relations, and the terrors of life in New York to have surfaced recently. It is surprising that it won Broadway's Tony Award for Best Play, since New Yorkers like to think their city and its huddled masses retain at least a shred of humanity, grace and humour - qualities stressed in this cheerful production, to the exclusion, perhaps, of harsher realities. Autumn leaves are falling in Central Park, menace lurks in the bushes; but the human spirit survives. The audience loved it.

Two old men, one black, one white, share a park bench, trading jokes and insults, stories and memories. Herb Gardner tells us that he saw them one day in Central Park, "an old white guy and an old black guy... they were obviously friends, and getting a big kick out of hollering at each other". Here was the germ for a vignette of city life, which Gardner expands with a few extra characters, lightly sketched. He makes the "white guy" (Paul Scofield) a Lithuanian Jew and lifelong Communist, a dreamer and a liar (Walter Mitty with a dash of Willy Loman), and provides him with a stylish daughter (Susan Fleetwood) who works in Park Avenue real estate, having long since abandoned her student radicalism, and who proposes to put her dad in an old people's home to stop him from wandering the city streets. Midge, the "black guy" (Howard Rollins), is cast as an apartment house superintendent; a passing jogger turns out to be the Yopie tenant-committee chairman, who has been charged with easing the old man out of his job and the basement flat which goes with it. Representing the larger New York world are a tough young white mugger, a cowboy drug pusher, and a pretty girl with a sketchbook.

It is Paul Scofield's play, and he obviously relishes the challenge. Though neither his speech patterns nor his personality resembles those of the eighty-year-old New York Jewish socialist I happen to know best, he gives a flawless impersonation of a recognizable type, selfish but lovable, still nursing dreams of justice and equality. In deed, the audience, mainly well-heeled, bursts into spontaneous applause when the old Trotskyist eloquently defends the liberal virtues of heart, spirit and imagination against capitalist predators, young and old. They also applauded when Rollins pulls a knife on the cowboy pusher, moving with dignity towards what can only be his death. He took a beguiling and utterly natural occasion, straight man to Scofield's garrulous comedian, they play to each other with the clownish, self-mocking wit of the vaudeville teams they both remember so fondly.

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## Waif meets yobbo

Alan Jenkins

Sid and Nancy  
Various cinemas

An everyday story of love, depravity, degradation and death among the addicted classes, *Sid and Nancy*, though never quite confounding ends with means in the way of, say Vincente Minelli's Van Gogh epic *Last for Life*, is not entirely true to either its frame (faction biopic) or its form (romantic melodrama).

Sid is, or was, Sid Vicious, "bass-guitarist" with punk-rock idols the Sex Pistols ("Never mind the bollocks, here's the Sex Pistols", "Pretty Vacant", etc.), whose manic on-stage spasms of yobbo discontent, low on musical drive and invention but high on anything that could be swilled, spat, sniffed, sprayed or spurted, flashed briefly across the firmament in the Jubilee summer of 1977. Nancy Spungen is his American girlfriend. The origins of punk may well have been in the rhetoric of working-class, no-job, no-hope anarchy-as-offensive-weapon but, under the tutelage of Malcolm McLaren, it grew to a multi-million pound enterprise: what began as an outrage became a look (somewhere between washed-out cock-also and tattered rat); a thousand bootiques on the model of McLaren's own "Boy" in the King's Road were spawned, and a million tourists' camera-shutters started clicking. Very little of the original impulse, shock value or (in some cases salutary) nastiness survives into the 1980s or into Alex Cox's film.

We see something of the band's difficulties in putting together a decent track-in-trade, we see them fizzing and spinning before a lot of wrecked and wrecking kids (but do not hear enough of their music), we see the decline of their fortunes and eventual break-up while on tour in the United States, all against a dimly suggested background of futile aggression and unpleasantness (futile because there isn't a bourgeois in sight to *épater*). Little of that other background, the one which saw the potential of a promisingly raucous "protest" and then betrayed it into commerce, is explored. Instead the film focuses attention on the *amour fou* of Vicious and Nancy: boy meets girl, girl intro-

## Monkey business

John Sutherland

NICK DARKE  
The Dead Monkey  
The Pit, Barbican

*The Dead Monkey* is a simple tale of beach folks in California with a few far out of the ordinary touches: Dolores and Hank are left over from the surfing Sixties. In the druging Eighties Hank is a travelling salesman peddling bites in the bible belt. Dolores is an anxious, pre-menopausal nothing. They live somewhere around La Jolla (one guesses) still on the beach and in the vicinity of the San Diego Wild Animal Park (one guesses). The play chronicles the last days of their marriage which ends, as do two out of three Californian marriages nowadays, unnaturally.

What makes Darke's play different from just another divorce Californian style is the monkey. Hank first caught Dolores's eye, as the surfer who did his stuff with a pet monkey on his back. This is unusual although, if one thinks about it, no more unusual than spending your life trying to float expertly at sixty miles an hour on a seven-foot length of driftwood. Over their seventeen years together the monkey (never named) has come to dominate the marriage. Hank indulges him like a favourite child. Dolores, it amazes, has been unfaithful to her man with the monkey (very well endowed, she confides) and has even earned some extra housekeeping by putting on sex shows with the little beast in the back of rich men's limos. This too is unusual, and when it is revealed to Hank causes him apoplectic distress.

The play opens with the monkey dead on the table. A velvet-queen-centenary-salesman gives it as his professional opinion that old age is the cause of death. But Dolores (Hank's) may have

duces bay to heroin, and the three embark on a ghastly, predictable dance of death together.

So we have a great deal of destruction and self-destruction, a great many needle-tracks and late-night domestic squabbles, much cold turkey, many empty baked-bean cans, until finally the film settles into the room at the New York Chelsea Hotel where Spungen, we are given to understand, impales herself on a knife held by Vicious, and bleeds incessantly to death.

Despair, dishevelment and delinquency are glamorized by the skillful direction and often beautiful photography. *Sid and Nancy* lacks the energy and bite of Cox's first feature film, *Repo Man*, but it bears witness to an enduring fascination with the surfaces of Anglo-American nihilism. The performance of Gary Oldman, as Sid, is powerful (he has contrived an uncanny physical resemblance to his wasted original); Nancy is portrayed (by Chloe Webb) as a love-starved waif, whining and bullying her way into Vicious's strange affections, and, when she is not turning the stomach, can touch the heart; no one else is given much of a chance. The script has sacrificed almost every resource of language to the expletive: a certain rawness is gained thereby, but in places even that is lost to a juvenile, glancing satire ("Take him and that, you naughty newscaster you", says a leather-and-correction prostitute - an interesting cameo by Ann Lambton - to her client). McLaren (David Hayman) seems less a Senghali than an avuncular leprechaun, Johnny Rotten, the band's singer Drew Schofield, was probably closer to Vicious (who died of an overdose shortly after the New York *debut*) than anyone except Nancy; he has disowned the film and disavowed any likeness, and McLaren has done likewise.

In the film, the only winner is heroin. Now that the phrase "addicted classes" has less irony about it than one might wish, I wonder whether this depiction of enslavement to the opiate of the masses does not linger a mile too long on the desolate grey beauty of the early-morning Bawery where the deals are done, and on the rich, neon-crossed lights and shades of the unbelievably squalid room where the deed is done, where the doomed lovers - too young to die, too stupid to live - enact their final, sexless, speechless, loveless tryst.



"Kiki de Montparnasse" (1924) by Man Ray, from the exhibition reviewed below.

## Idiotic eros

Matthew Gale

L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism  
Hayward Gallery, until October 5

In 1930, Luis Buñuel's film *L'Age d'Or* met with public indignation, leading to its banning. Although this is unlikely to recur at *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*, concerned with essentially the same theme, the exhibition may still induce a shock in the visitor. For here we encounter the marvellous and the bizarre dormant within reality, as the Surrealists and their fellow-travellers saw it.

In their search for paths to the subconscious underworld explored by Freud, these artists turned early on to photography. Certainly they enjoyed the paradox that photography, the medium seemingly inextricably tied to reality, could be used as a weapon against it. To facilitate this, they manipulated the process itself. Max Ernst employed photomontage in the 1920s, and this is taken up in the 1930s in the often amusing work of Georges Hugnet. Man Ray, the most impressive Surrealist photographer, discovered rayographs and solarization, and these find an echo in the relief-like presences captured by Raoul Ubac. Along with these, other quite simple means (odd angles, doubling, etc) were employed to achieve startling effects. Hands become unexpectedly animated; eyes and mouths shift in scale and lose their normal anchorages.

Alongside those already mentioned, it is the lesser-known photographers who provide the

interest, through their unfamiliarity. There is an extensive showing of Maurice Tbarud's allusive double exposures. Most extraordinary are the seemingly mundane yet monstrous images by Jacques-André Boiffard. His career neatly illustrates the presence of parallel "surrealisms" implicit in the exhibition's subtitle. Boiffard stands next to André Breton, the Surrealist leader, in the 1924 photograph of the "Centrale Surrealiste". Having provided photographs for Breton's *Nada*, he broke away towards Georges Bataille's *Documents*, in which many of his close-ups were published. This move was made by many in the acrimonious break with Breton around 1929, but its effect was to enrich surrealism in the wider sense.

Thus a broad range of artists (whether officially Surrealist or not) showed a concern with the central theme of the show, *L'Amour fou* - the delicious, obsessional power of love. We are allowed glimpses of private sensual worlds where the object of worship - and abuse - is the female body. It is ideally lit and posed by Man Ray; twisted and turned by André Kertész; and, with Hans Bellmer's lifelike doll, distorted and dismembered.

Intriguing in the face of this male-dominated vision of the erotic female are the oudes by Lee Miller and Nusch Eluard, and the extraordinary legs by Dora Maar. The richly illustrated catalogue only touches upon the role of women in the opening essays on aesthetics. It must be the workings of "objective chance" that the authors are all women, echoing the example of Nancy Cunard, who arranged the smuggling to London of a copy of *L'Age d'Or*.

## AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Campellton Na 288

Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than August 22. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date. The solution and results will appear on August 29.

1 She kept an antique shop - or it kept her. Among Apollon's spoils and Bristol gins. The faded silks, the heavy furniture. She watched her reflection in the brass Salvers and silver bowls, as if to prove Polish was all there was no need of love.

2 Laugh if you like at this mysterious detritus Of middle-class life in the liberal past. The playfulness stuffed, and the frightful epigram. You who are now overtaken and declassified Laugh while you can, for the time may come round When the rubbish you treasure will lie in this place.

3 Look left at the birds stitched still in their ringing, at the sword half-drawn from the scabbard - look left, more left, to me, this side of the window, a two-legged, man-legged cabinet of antique feelings, all of them genuine.

Campellton Na 285

Winner: J. C. McCaskar

Answers:

1 Apart from the original job of the room was...

terribly cheerless. The hard little sofa, the few and hard little arm-chairs were upholstered in a cretonne of so dim and dismal a pattern that it was hard to imagine anybody, even a Boreley, actually choosing it, to imagine them going into a shop, taking a seat, having cretonnes thrown over a screen and suddenly saying, 'all excited, 'That's the very thing for me - stop!'

Nancy Mitford, *Love in a Cold Climate*, chapter 1.

2 The house was perversely full of souvenirs of places even more ugly than itself and of things it would have been a pious duty to forget. The worst horror was the acres of varnish, something advertised and snelly, with which everything was smeared: it was as if a conviction that the application of it, by the sheer amount of the B-5 on rainy days, was the amusement of the B-5 on rainy days.

Henry James, *The Spoils of Poynton*, chapter 1.

3 That is how I came to grow up with all manner of terrible cut-glass mirrors with bevelled edges hanging from chains over tiled fireplaces, shaggy off-white carpets, zig-zag patterned rugs, nests of walnut tables, semicircular armchairs in pale creaking hide, standard lamps with velveteen over radiators and, while wrought-iron trellises over radiators... and place de résistance, a collection of china and glass birds, some rather large, which march along the shelves of lightly polished pale wood bookcases with sliding doors made of yet more glass.

John Galsworthy, *Back to Back*, chapter 2.



## Doomsday deferred

Lindsay Duguid

CAROLYN SLAUGHTER  
The Innocents  
219pp. Viking. £9.95.  
0670810169

*The Innocents* is an attempt to fuse – if not to reconcile – two visions of Africa: not simply the white view and the black view, but the opposition of old Africa, in which the benevolent *bas* was free to rule his men, and a new Africa without liberty and with the barest promise of hope. In the novel the old Africa, mostly seen through a child's eyes, is heat and emptiness, a land of shimmering horizons, dotted with native villages, orchards and *dorps*.

The family had lived there so long, generation after generation, that they'd forced the dust and desolation back and made a little oasis. It had fruit orchards, and old trees watered by the river, bougainvillea that covered the whitewashed walls, fig trees that gave us fat, juicy fruit and even a grapevine hanging with small sweet grapes as good as you get in the Cape.

The new Africa is seen in the munitions factories, the ugly brick huts built to house black workers, and in the burnt-out buildings and corpse-strewn roads.

The focus is clearer on the old Edenic realm. Carolyn Slaughter tells a tale, set against a background of a feudal farm in a time not unlike the present, of family disintegration, prejudice and repressed passion. The account of the white twins Dawie and Zeld, growing up on the farm with the local black girl, Hannah, whom they treat as their equal, involves thwarted love, orphans, squandered inheritances and murdered lovers. It is partly told through Zeld and Hannah's evocations of the

past and partly re-enacted through Dawie and Hannah's child Ruth, a character whose adolescent intensity makes her convincing as both victim and agent of the future, a fitting symbol for modern Africa. As each element in the family history is uncovered, the influence of the past on the present becomes clear and the cleverly mapped plot produces a series of minor revelations, detonated at intervals.

Slaughter is clearly at home in nostalgic re-creations of childhood, and her heavily cadenced monologues, with their jagged Afrikaans interjections, lend an intensity to the first two parts of her novel, which are concerned with the past. The third, in which the story moves to the riot-riven city, takes in the later career of Dawie, now a white liberal lawyer married to a vindictive but faithless wife, and attempts to describe the present reality of life in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, is less convincing; one particularly notices the absence of the vivid descriptive writing of the earlier part of the book. Towards the end we return to the country, and as the local police chief makes sure that the black workers are turned off the farm and the rioting turns to bombing in the cities, there is a suggestion of a happy ending, a hint that, in the return of Dawie and the birth of Ruth's (black) son, there is a faint hope for the future.

In such a novel as this, history as well as geography is a backdrop to the action; Carolyn Slaughter uses impending disaster to heighten tension and, although she makes discreet use of symbols, she succeeds in conveying the passionate intensity of her characters. The vagueness and diffidence of the finale, however, in which several possible outcomes are suggested before the rather idealized ending, is a disappointment. There remains a sense of doomsday deferred.

## Native son

T. O. Treadwell

WILLIAM HUMPHREY  
The Collected Stories  
371pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.95.  
0436209853

Despite the example of such eminent practitioners as Hardy and Faulkner, it is easy to imagine that it might be uncomfortable to be regarded as a regional writer. Apart from the imputation of provincialism, there is the suspicion that a writer, by limiting himself to a particular locale, is somehow lacking in creative imagination. This is nonsense, of course, but it may explain the temptation that writers with a strong sense of place sometimes feel to voyage out of familiar waters. Since the publication of his much-praised first novel *Home From the Hill* in 1958, William Humphrey has been identified with the Red River country of north-eastern Texas where he was born and spent his childhood. Humphrey has lived in the North-East for many years and has extended the geographical range of his fiction to regions as remote from the Red River as Wales, but his writing loses much of its energy and precision when he moves away from his native prairie.

*The Collected Stories* (the definite article in the title seems somehow immodest) reveal the author's strengths and weaknesses very clearly. The volume reprints the contents of Humphrey's two earlier collections, *The Last Husband* (1953) and *A Time and a Place* (1968), adding two pieces which seem to be published here for the first time. About two-thirds of the stories, including all of the best ones, are set in north-eastern Texas or southern Oklahoma in the early 1930s, when drought and depression ruined many a hard-working farmer and storekeeper, at the same time as a bewildered handful were transformed overnight into millionaires by the discovery of oil.

As these stories make clear, eastern Texas, at least in the years before the post-war boom, belonged in feeling more to the South than to the West. Humphrey's characters share the Southern preoccupation with the ramifications of caste: kinfolk and clan, and they cling to a sense of the antebellum past as a golden age from which the present has sadly degenerated. This can be successfully treated as comedy, as in the excellent story called "Quail for Mr.

Forester". Here, the surviving member of a small town's most distinguished family is so far reduced in circumstances that he is forced to open a hardware store and is then nearly bankrupted by the townspeople whose respect for his family is so great that they cannot bring themselves to be waited on by him: "The first customer told how it seemed as if the world was coming to an end, and said that she had to turn her head while Mr. Forester wrapped her package. Everyone had been touched and pleased to hear that it had been a very clumsily wrapped package."

The precariousness of Southern gentility is neatly suggested in "Report Cards", in which a supercilious schoolboy is tormented by the knowledge that he is allied to a legion of awkward and ignorant country cousins. But darker forces than snobbery are at work in Humphrey's small Texas town, and these he can handle with delicacy, as in "Mouth of Brass" in which a small boy from one of the town's better families forms a friendship with a black street vendor who is stabbed to death by a drunken redneck. The white inhabitants conspire, with varying degrees of shame, to cover up the crime and forget its victim, and the boy's grief is embarrassedly dismissed.

All of the Red River stories are distinguished by Humphrey's powerful sense of place and his sensitive ear for the rhythms of the various local dialects, but some of them are flawed by disharmony of tone. "The Ballad of Jesse Neighbours", for instance, about a poor but ambitious Oklahoma farm boy driven by desperation to crime, wobbles uncertainly between tragedy and farce.

When Humphrey moves away from the Texas-Oklahoma border country the awkwardness becomes more disabling. "The Last Husband", for example, is a long-winded and flabby morality about adultery in the New York commuter belt, its characters shadowy and implausible and its plot over-complicated and dull. Even less satisfactory is "In Sickness and Health", an unconvincing and pointless tale about a reprobate old fisherman and his shrewish German wife dwelling to discord on Long Island. To compare this piece with "The Hardys", a subtle and touching study of an elderly Texan couple's inability to understand each other's feelings, is to see at once how much more satisfying a writer Humphrey is when he is content to root himself in his native soil.

## Mating rituals

Savkar Altinel

MONIQUE CHARLESWORTH  
The Glass House  
234pp. Hamish Hamilton. £9.95.  
0241119065

The schizophrenic city of Hamburg, strait-laced and pleasure-seeking, smart and sleazy, is the apt setting of *The Glass House*, Monique Charlesworth's first novel. The year is 1971 and Victor Genscher, at the age of thirty-nine, has every reason to be pleased with his life. He is good-looking, suave, and successful in business and with women. The Economic Miracle personified, he can also look forward to scaling even greater heights, for he is about to acquire *Der Abend*, an ailing scandal sheet which he is confident he can turn into a success.

In grimy Altona, however, lives Ludwig Levison, surrounded, Fagin-like, by an army of small boys to whom he teaches judo during the day before retiring at night to the glass-house where he cultivates exotic tropical plants. An unbeliever, but of mixed Jewish-Catholic descent, he, too, is a personification, but this time of the conscience Germany has sought to destroy but has succeeded only in distorting. Levison knows the secrets of Victor's early life among the ruins of post-war Berlin and now, out of a twisted sense of justice that is as firm as that of any terrorist, is determined to ruin him.

As this pair confront each other, their struggle, which is as much a perverse mating ritual, involves a third; young Johanna, a half-English virgin bluestocking who, drawn back to the land of her birth by the love of Victor, spends most of her time filling her diary with her thoughts on him and on her literature classes at Hamburg University. Meanwhile her friend, voluptuous, blonde Linda, speaking German fluently without any regard for the niceties of

gender and class, makes her way through the city's men, from the monks at the Kishu Centre to *Gastarbeiter* who actually prefer boys but are graciously prepared to accept her as a substitute.

There are, as the publishers suggest, hints of Heinrich Böll in the working-out of the novel's themes, although the skilful blending of realism and allegory, the deft plotting, the characters that come dangerously close to caricature and yet live, and the sharp intelligence of the writing equally recall Muriel Spark. Ultimately, however, the author's style is her own, and so is her engagement with Germany, which she views as an informed outsider, depicting with dispassionate clarity an at once fragile and suffocating world in which "everything that matter[s]" has been suppressed to make room for a hollow prosperity.

The novel, though, is also the story of the transformation of Johanna, who, in finally growing out of her involvement with Victor, and, through him, with Germany, steps out of the glass-house of her youth to come of age. She is an appealing figure, with her earnestness tempered by self-mockery ("Where can it lead to, after all? Sigi the cul-de-sac; Victor the highway to perdition. A Department of Work melodrama"), her refined sexual anxieties ("The horror of it, to be found lacking by a man who's never read a classic book"), her mercilessly accurate observation ("Germans make the best hippies . . . for they alone have the necessary seriousness"), and, when the occasion demands it, her splendid bitchiness ("She had . . . the crocodile bag on a long chain and matching shoes . . . that are de rigueur in her set. I feel less sorry for the crocodiles knowing they've found a home from home.") "Keine Schönheit, aber sehr lebenswürdig" is the verdict of a German acquaintance, but she is more than just charming: she is actually *liebenswert*, and her portrayal is the chief among the many triumphs of this witty and stylish book.

## Attic affections

Jeanette Winterson

REBECCA BROWN  
The Haunted House  
138pp. Picador. £8.95.

It is not the past that is dangerous, but our memory of it. In Rebecca Brown's frightening first novel the past comes back to claim its own in rather the same way that Death claims the knight in Bergman's *Seventh Seal*. There is some jousting to be done, but the result is inevitable. In Brown's case it is not mortality that makes it inevitable but memory.

The novel is divided into three parts. In the first, "The Drunken Pilot", the child Robin learns to negotiate her father's long absences, her mother's patient suffering and the continual upheaval of their lives resulting from his career in the Navy. The descriptions of life on the move are painfully well done; the mother trying to glamorize their roamings, the threadless sleeping through like the stains beneath the one coat of paint they only ever have time for. It's a world of lost friends and unfinished conversations, relived now and again when Daddy's home.

Against this incomplete dullness, Robin sets a rich fantasy life and becomes less and less sure of the difference between what is happening and what she imagines is happening. Always moving on, they seem to have more past than other people: more snapshots, more souvenirs, more things to re-invent. On a trip to Italy, when it is clear that the marriage has broken down and that the brave pilot is an alcoholic with no more sea-free Navy days, the mother begins to collude in the re-inventing. Robin grows up; taking this double vision with her.

In the second part, "Mom, the making of a Star", Robin comes home to find her mother famous and apparently free of the past, even to the point of denying she has any children. She commissions Robin to write her biography, and there begins between them a tussle for truth that can have no conclusion in Brown's world of twisted realities. As readers we think we know what is going on: one world is making

believe, the other isn't – but these positions are always being reversed, or both mother and daughter are locked in opposing fantasies that leave no solid ground beneath our feet. After a chase across continents they confront each other across the aisle of a plane piloted by the father; but in a world of fakes, even the denouement is a fake.

Part Three, "The Haunted House", starts naturally enough. Robin and her lover are reconstructing her mother's house, tearing away the past, literally building a new life. Into all this wide open space Brown slips a menacing claustrophobia as Robin begins to imagine the house as it was, and the house starts to crawl beneath the force of her bulldozer memory. Her tenuous hold on the present gives way along with the floors and ceilings. The house floods, she drowns with it. That she could have escaped is clear, but she is trapped inside her head, where there are no doors.

In place and detail Brown is straightforwardly American, but the experiences of her characters are born not out of their Americanness (as they are in the characters of, say, Jay McInerney or Brett Easton Ellis) but out of her humanness. There is nothing tentative about Brown's writing; we believe her because she has a sure hand, because she can make something bizarre into something likely, and because it is our own fears we recognize and our own ability disastrously to re-invent. We are left with the uncomfortable feeling that our loves and plans are taking place in an attic room in the mind, and that once the mind takes control, reality has very little to do with it.

Peterloo Press announces its second competition for new poetry, entries for which should not exceed forty lines and should be submitted by February 2, 1987. Sponsored by Markes Spencer, the competition offers six prizes totalling £2,350, including a first prize of £1,000 and a special Afro-Caribbean or Asian prize of £500; the poems winning these two prizes will be published in *The Guardian* during April 1987. Full details and rules of entry are available from Peterloo Press, Trevoys Farm Cottage, Upton Cross, Liskeard, Cornwall PL16 5BQ. (Tel: Liskeard 62801).

## Geometry and anguish

John Melmoth

EDWARD TIMMS and DAVID KELLEY (Editors)  
Unreal City: Urban experience in modern European literature and art  
268pp. Manchester University Press. £26.50.  
0719017483

Rather than filling an obvious gap, *Unreal City* first proposes one and then stages a surreptitious raid on it. Expensively produced (if markedly illustrated), it would seem destined for the coffee-table were it not for the markedly acquired nature of some of the tastes it caters for. Every reference to Eliot, Joyce, Pound, Baudelaire, Aragon, Brecht or Lorea seems to trigger two to Aldo Palazzeschi (Italian Futurist poet), Jacob van Hoddiss (German Expressionist poet), Ludwig Meidner (German Expressionist painter), Otto Wagner (Viennese Functionalist architect), Vincente Huidobro (Spanish "ultraist" poet) and an international brigade of minor semi-documentary painters. A lot is asked of any general reader who strays this way. David Kelley's chapter on the city poetry of Apollinaire assumes a shared response to "Baudelaire/Lafargue/Kirsch" and the ironic ends of post-symbolist neurotic while making erudite connections between Apollinaire's "Bestiaire", Plessors' "The Acrobat With a Ball" and a sixteenth-century emblem book by Aleiati. Elsa Strietman's "Occupied City" concedes that Antwerp was "not one of the great metropolitan cities" only to focus on one of its sons – Paul van Ostsien. Given a merely average level of cultural in-sularity, there is an inevitable element of

damning with faint praise in describing one's subject as "the most comprehensive Modernist writer in Belgium and the Netherlands in the early twentieth century". Strietman's conviction that von Ostaie's Dadaist prose poem "Bezzette Stad" "deserves to be better known" is not, it would seem, readily communicable. Edward Timms's introduction specifies "the challenge of the city": around 1900, the city became the focus for an aesthetic debate about "the dynamics of technological civilization" and its impact on the quality of life. Acknowledging that there were (and are) significant differences between Paris and St Petersburg or London's East and West Ends, Timms sketches a consensus "epitomised by the topos of the 'unreal city'". The urban experience is one of disorientation and dismay, the fear of impending collapse. Out of a certain amount of flannel – "the metropolis ultimately becomes a metaphor – a dynamic configuration of the conflicting hopes and fears of the twentieth century" – emerges a role for any Modernist not overly sensitive to cliché: to "touch the nerve of urban anxiety".

Unfortunately for this scheme of things, Timms's first contributor, Raymond Williams ("The Metropolis and the Emergence of Modernism"), seems reluctant to take his word for it. In the first place, Williams argues, there is nothing exclusively modern about metropolitan Angst as Wordsworth's *Prelude*, James Thompson's *City of Dreadful Night* and Engels's *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844* (which reported the "dissolution of mankind into monads") prove. Second, the picture is complicated by the fact that

Wordsworth and Engels were also conscious of the "liberating diversity" of city life, of the new forms of social organization which it made possible. And finally, Modernism is not to be defined by the nature of its response to the city: "it is rather the new and specific location of the artists and intellectuals of this movement within the changing cultural milieu of the metropolis".

Generally, editorial control might have been exercised more rigorously. Walter Benjamin's observation about Paris being the capital of the nineteenth century is quoted three times in the first fifty pages; Pound's distinction between the "narrative" life of the village and the "cinematographic" life of the city similarly appears three times. Nor does there seem to be any consistent policy regarding the translation of titles and the shorter extracts. There may be some reason for reducing Rilke's "*Leid Stadt*" to "pain city", but there really any point in rendering "*spécères baroques*" as "horroreque spectacles" or suggesting that Baudelaire wrote something called *The Flowers of Evil*?

There is no doubting the contributors' enthusiasm for and knowledge of their subjects; it is, however, difficult to avoid the suspicion that a number of them are here under false pretences. Muriel Segal's "Rilke's Paris – *ci-à-pleine de rêves*" has more to say about Freud than about Paris, Frank Whitford's "The City in Painting" is obliged to gloss the inconvenient facts that Cézanne and Van Gogh sought refuge from Paris in Provence and that Gauguin fled to the South Seas.

*Unreal City* covers too much ground, as though attempting to make up in breadth of

reference what it lacks in argument. Michael Minden's "The City in Early Cinema" copes interestingly enough with *Metropolis* (the disaster movie of "eerily uninhabited, totally mechanised city spaces"), *Berlin* and Eisenstein's *October*, but steers clear of any comparative-contrast approach. Timms's "Musil's Vienna and Kafka's Prague" runs out of time before dealing with the second city in any but the most cursory fashion. Whitford's "The City in Printing" takes in Impressionism, Post-impressionism, Futurism and Edvard Munch all in a few pages.

However, and for all that it sometimes looks like a book of lists, *Unreal City* does have good things to offer. The Futurists and Surrealists are, as always, good value for money; Breton, for instance, regarded the city as the realm of "le hasard objectif", of delicious and disconcerting "coincidental configurations". Maynkovsky is given scope to prove himself a good poet. Lorea's explanation for his decision to visit New York ("geometry and anguish") in 1929 is engagingly disingenuous: "New York seems horrible to me, but that's precisely why I'm going there. I think I'll have a good time." Best of all is Pound, whom Michael Long ("Eliot, Pound, Joyce: Unreal City?") figures as "modern poetry's Le Corbusier, the dreamer of *la ville radieuse*". It was in this capacity that Pound made a perhaps unlovable but unforgettable distinction between the "inst squalor, utter decrepitude" of the London of the Hell Cantos and the cool lineaments of his "paradiso terrestre" of the Pisan Cantos, the glittering city of Dione, "whose terraces were the colours of stars".

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## The novelist within

Mark Casserley

GRAHAM SMITH  
The Achievement of Graham Greene  
228pp. Brighton: Harvester Press. £18.95.  
071080604X

The first paragraph of *The Man Within*, Graham Greene's first novel (1929), seems an appropriate place to begin a survey of "what looks increasingly like Greene's completed work", but Graham Smith's title shows that he intends something more. He goes on to discuss some recurring motifs (dreams, images of doors) as elements in Greene's distinctive fictional world, but this never becomes a consistent presence in Smith's discussion; instead one has the sense of him wrestling with an implicit adversary who would call the book *The Problem of Graham Greene*. The charge would go something like this: Greene's imagination is too weak to avoid being swamped by his material (exotic locations, foreign travel, the genre-writing of the "entertainments"), so that he is merely the "good popular writer" of his own modest assessment, rather than a major figure. Putting the opposing case, Smith relies too often on our acquiescence in his adjectives, speaking of "the appallingly poignant attempt at sexual comfort" between Conrad Drover and his sister-in-law, or Greene's "wonderful appreciation" of a Fritz Lang film. The description of the *Collected Essays* as "300 pages of unalloyed delight" is not altogether penetrating.

Smith is much more successful at giving a coherent account of Greene's "fertile and complex novelistic career", and here he confronts the issue of popularity head on. He shows that the "entertainments" were not dictated by practical necessity, but a way out of the dead-end of Greene's early career. The distinction of *Sambo and Train* and *The Ministry of Fear* is convincingly shown, and, in Smith's analysis of the latter, the "master images" come to life and reveal meaning. For Smith, deepening meaning is the story of this part of Greene's career: *Brighton Rock* goes beyond its predecessors to begin a cycle of novels that achieve "new heights of intensity". Discussing "Fiction and Belief", Smith suggests that modernism was verse to commitment, but that the committed writer faces the possibility that the fiction may become an order which can subvert outside its author's belief-system; he therefore avoids presenting *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter* or *The End of the Affair* as

didactic works. In any case, Greene, as Smith demonstrates, was responding to his own times, as a man sharing sympathies with writers on the Left but whose Catholicism gave him a distinct perspective on events.

Dealing with the later career, Smith pays special attention to *A Burnt-Out Case* and to the "extended comic vein" revealed by *Our Man in Havana*; characteristically, he maintains that the novel "triumphantly demonstrates the critical truism that comedy is every bit as serious a form as tragedy". He feels that Greene's interest in film has not received adequate critical discussion (notwithstanding that two full-length studies of the subject have appeared in the past two years alone); in comparison with other intellectuals of the 1930s, who were still part of a literary-oriented culture, Greene responded to the cinema as a social form, and it had its influence on his style, which acquired the rhythms of modern life – Smith takes a small example, from *It's a Battle-field*, and shows how the use of the gerund creates a sense of movement.

Shaw: *Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies Volume Six* edited by Stanley Weintraub (179pp. Pennsylvania State University Press. \$22.50. 0 271 00426 6) contains eleven critical essays on Shaw; two pieces written by Shaw himself in *The Star*; two reviews of recently published books relating to Shaw; and a "Continuing Checklist of Shawiana" by John R. Pfeiffer.

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## Cause and circumstance

### Blair Worden

**DEREK HIRST**  
*Authority and Conflict: England 1603-1658*  
 394pp. Arnold. £27.50.  
 07131 61558  
**G. E. AYLMER**  
*Rebellion or Revolution?: England 1640-1660*  
 274pp. Oxford University Press. £12.50.  
 0 19219799  
**RICHARD OLLARD and PAMELA TUDOR-CRAIG** (Editors)  
*For Veronica Wedgwood: These studies in seventeenth-century history*  
 251pp. Collins. £15.  
 000247177

Some of the resemblances between Derek Hirst's textbook in Arnold's History of England and G. E. Aylmer's volume in OPUS Books are more surprising than others. The most predictable are those of quality. The two books carry an authority, and inspire a trust, that derive from the long immersion of their authors in the primary and secondary literature of a period which their specialist writings have done so much to illuminate. Offered - principally it seems to a student market - as works of fresh synthesis rather than of fresh vision, the two books none the less bring independence of judgment to almost every aspect of their subjects; and they are written with exemplary clarity and unadorned clarity.

Less easily foreseeable are the similarities of interpretation. To the surfaces of both books there rise ambivalent feelings about the transformations of historical perspective that have occurred since Aylmer published his earlier survey, the still useful *The Struggle for the Constitution*, in 1963. Both authors acknowledge the failure of versions which presented the civil war as a blow for progress or credited it with the triumph of a gentry class or of bourgeois values; they accept the political impact of provincial and localist sentiment; and they recognize the difficulties of explaining the religious passions of the century in socio-economic terms. Yet they hold persuasively to some traditional convictions. They believe that national constitutional conflicts lie among the origins of the Puritan Revolution; that a concept of liberty figured in the outlook of contemporaries and not merely of a Whiggish posterity; and that the civil war came from a sky at least half-dark. To be told that truth lies somewhere between the extremes of recent argument may not be the most fulfilling of intellectual

experiences, but it is often a necessary one.

Hirst's *Authority and Conflict* is a striking accomplishment. Arnold have given him the space for a breadth and depth of treatment unrivalled in any comparable book in the period. The fragmentation of recent research has made the earlier and mid-seventeenth century unusually difficult to write about; and one can but marvel at the bulk of information kept under argumentative control and at the dexterity with which sophisticated points of analysis are woven into a general narrative. Sometimes compressed in its treatment of the unfashionable subjects of war and diplomacy, the book is at its strongest on parliamentary conflict, on the interaction of national and regional developments, and on the relationship of political events to economic discontent. The years after 1640 are much more fully treated than those before it, a decision which perhaps concedes too much to the chronological complications of the Puritan Revolution, but which does provide room for a masterly account of the problems and policies of the regimes of the 1650s, the decade where recent writing comes least often to Hirst's aid.

Aylmer's *Rebellion or Revolution?* is a shorter and less ambitious work. The mannerisms of a lecturer who builds his listeners' confidence by taking them over largely familiar ground but who goads them into thought by the injection of his own perceptions. Like Hirst, Aylmer seems more at home among the Roundheads than among the Cavaliers. Perhaps the book would have benefited from a sharper focus or a stronger line of argument. Sometimes Aylmer's asides and qualifications seem almost more important to him than his main direction; and some subjects are too briefly treated for substantial conclusions to emerge. He proposes as "the argument of this book that, whereas contingent circumstances did indeed in a multitude of ways help to determine what did or did not happen" in the Puritan Revolution, nevertheless "several of the necessary causes, without which events could not have been as they were, lay far back in time"; but the case could hardly be stated less controversially. A promise on the dust-jacket about the gains made by "the middle class" in the Puritan Revolution is not delivered. Yet any compact survey of this kind will provoke objections. The principal virtues of the work lie in its solidity and maturity of judgment and in the gift which Aylmer shares with Hirst of refreshing the familiar even in expounding it. There is an exceptionally full and helpful chronological table.

Hirst's and Aylmer's books are likely to be widely used. A review which recommends them might indicate what readers will not find in them. Either volume would be excellent as a second book to read on its subject, but not as a first. In particular, the three scene-setting chapters of Hirst's volume assume much prior knowledge. Both authors begin their accounts of the scientific revolution with the question whether Puritanism was responsible for it - which is surely to start at the wrong end. But then the history of ideas, although accurately treated by both authors, is not the area where either of them seems happiest.

Narrative, so confidently scorned by the prophets of sociological history a decade or two ago, is restored by Derek Hirst and Gerald Aylmer to its essential role. No reader of their books could take story-telling to be a mindless activity. Yet while both authors turn to chronology as the most convenient and sensible arrangement of their material, they do not celebrate it as an art. In that and other respects they address the reader's intellect more often than his imagination. The merits of their books are different from those which distinguish the writings of Dame Veronica Wedgwood, whose work has survived the disfavour of fashion, and who is honoured now by a pleasant collection of essays on seventeenth-century history. Although not uniformly ambitious, they deserve to be better known than contributions to Festschriften often are.

Wedgwood's gift for the re-creation of personality - especially of royal and aristocratic personality - is fittingly reflected in the biographical emphasis of the book. Roger Lockyer, in a tribute to his fine life of Buckingham, traces the interaction of the private and the public in the favourite's relations with James I and Charles I. A. L. Rowse takes trouble with an essay on the careerist bishop John Thornborough; Roy Strong - in the only essay to do justice to Wedgwood's interest in Continental history - explores the diplomatic moves to find a Catholic and Italian wife for James's firmly Protestant heir, Prince Henry; Maurice Ashley - in the only essay whose centre of gravity lies late in the century - draws on recently discovered material in the Blenheim archives to reassess the role of the ex-Lovell John Wildman in the development of the Post Office; Oliver Miller demonstrates Strafford's informed admiration for Van Dyck; and Richard Ollard's elegant sketch of the character of Clarendon, which stresses the depth of feeling beneath the rational surface, has the acuteness of

one of the earl's own vignettes.

Wedgwood's principal work on seventeenth-century England belonged to a period of vigorous debate about the origins of the civil war. Two victims of that controversy, Christopher Hill and J. H. Hexter, are present in the book as learned and contentious as ever. Hill, for whom the term "revolution" has always seemed so appropriate to the events of the seventeenth century, asks how the word was used at the time. Two processes are detected: a "changed application from astronomy to politics" and, in politics, the emergence of a vocabulary of linear rather than cyclical historical development in which "revolution" could mean a break with the past rather than a return to it. Hexter writes on the Apology and Satisfaction of 1604 and on the relationship of the eloquent parliamentary protest to mainstream opinion in the Commons. The chief virtue of the piece is its reminder that the collective personality of the House could matter more than the fictional rivalries on which recent work has concentrated. Its chief puzzle is his decision to bypass those textual problems that were opened up by Geoffrey Elton's essay on the Apology more than twenty years ago and to follow without explanation the version of the document which Elton called "easily the most available". Hexter's resolve to place the Apology in "the process of the making of modern freedom" seems as strained as Hill's detection of "the modern meaning" of "revolution" in quotations where the word simply means disturbance or commotion.

There are two essays on Little Gidding: one by Robert Van der Weyer which argues that the community's character was more Protestant than contemporary accusations and subsequent Anglo-Catholic literature suggest; and one by Pamela Tudor-Craig which implies more or less the opposite. Ivan Rook's piece on the debates on the "Other House" in Richard Cromwell's parliament of 1659 is heavily on the parliamentary diary of Thomas Burton, whose powers of verbatim recording he may overestimate. The most searching and substantial essay is the concluding one, in which Austin Woolrych proposes 1660 rather than the conventional 1647-8 as the date of composition of the "dissension" in Milton's *History of Britain*, and presents the digression as a logical sequel to *The Ready and Easy Way*. I am not convinced; but Woolrych, right or wrong, has raised important contextual questions about a document whose significance for an understanding of Milton's thought has been persistently undervalued.

Leicester, and his work has a slightly different emphasis. In the new Introduction to *Landscape and Community in England*, he suggests that although localities should be studied "not simply for their own sake, but for the light they shed on English society as a whole", nevertheless "we need to pay greater attention than we have done . . . to the indigenous life of the local communities of England, and to the fact that it stemmed ultimately from different roots from that of the community of the realm". He amply justifies the point in twelve papers which display subtlety, originality and an acute awareness of regional and local differences; and a recent lecture printed here for the first time, "Dynasty, and community since the seventeenth century", is superb. Much of the emphasis is on Kent, where the demonstration of local differences of landscape and society is masterly; it whets the appetite for Everett's long-awaited book on the evolution of Kentish settlement.

Serious local historians have need of guides to a burgeoning subject. Some of the demand can be supplied by manuals like Hoskins's *Local History in England*, now in its third edition, or Beresford's *History on the Ground*, recently reprinted. There is also, however, a need for collections of seminal articles; not all of the pioneers have followed Finberg, who in the charming words of Beresford's tribute to him, "never subscribed to the view that a scholar's work, once published in article form, should thereafter be unseen". Gratitude is therefore due to the initiative of the Hambleton Press for including, among their recent reprints

of historians' essays, Beresford himself and Everett, as well as the equally distinguished Joan Thirk. The standard of these two volumes is not quite as high as others in the series; the reprints are photographic rather than reset, which leads to a variety of size, typeface and quality which Floberg, a printer before he became a local historian, would have detested. Both volumes suffer from careless proof-reading of the few new pages, including the omission of a list of plates, and of three acknowledged sources of reprints. In *Time and Place*, and in view of Beresford's visual strength, the poor quality of reproduction of his plates is unfortunate. However, both volumes have excellent indexes, and it is splendid to have so many pieces from widely scattered and out-of-print sources, conveniently together. Perhaps the publishers can be persuaded to perform a similar service for those of Hoskins's articles which are out of print.

*Custom, Courts and Counsel: Selected papers of the 6th British Legal History Conference, Norwich 1983*, edited by Albert Krieger, Michele Slater and Roger Virgoe (1984). Cass. £18. 0 2146 9265 1 contains ten of the papers given at that conference, including one by Morgan's "Whose Prerogative in Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century England?" Valerie C. Edwards's "Criminal Equity in Restoration London and Middlesex" and "The Norwich Court of Requests: A Tradition Continued" by Slater.

## Rescuing the Reformers

### John Bossy

**A. G. DICKENS and JOHN M. TONKIN**  
*The Reformation in Historical Thought*  
 443pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £35.  
 0631 46164  
**ROSEMARY O'DAY**  
*The Debate on the English Reformation*  
 224pp. Methuen. £12.95.  
 041672680

The most arresting sentence in A. G. Dickens's and John M. Tonkin's history of the history of the Reformation comes at the end of the last paragraph but two: "we see no reason to alter our perception that the central element in the Protestant Reformation was a conscious, essentially religious mission: to steer Christianity back in line with biblical sources after many centuries of hierarchical manipulation."

I read the final phrase as an expression of the authors' opinions about the history of the Church. Here, you feel, is Professor Dickens, after a substantial career as a Reformation historian, at the close of what will no doubt be his last major book, saying what he thinks about it all, something it sounds as if he has been wanting to say for rather a long time. I believe that is how most people will read it, and after some hesitation I am sure it is the right reading. True, when you look a second time you see that the phrase is in *omnis obliqua*, seeming to say not what the authors think but what they think (I cannot suppose that Dickens wrote "perception") the doers and hearers of the Protestant Reformation thought. Formally, the statement is not directed against medieval Catholicism, but against kinds of Reformation history which would underrate the religious feelings of Reformers, or suppose that they were doing something different from what they considered they were doing.

But that, as it turns out, cannot be quite what is being said. A third reading is enough to convince you that the form of the phrase is a politeness or rhetorical fiction. It does not actually follow from the rest of the paragraph. This begins by reporting a contemporary convergence of view between historians and theologians, which is explained by a tendency among theologians to see phases of Christian belief in their historical or "social" context. "This relationship", it goes on, "is of particular ongoing importance, for however gratefully we welcome the liberation of studies of the Reformation from narrow and partisan religious concerns and appreciate the broader human values which modern scholarship has opened up, we see no reason . . ."

So we (the authors, and by implication the public) are glad that Reformation history (1) is not now written by Catholics or Protestants, as a branch of apologetics, and (2) is written with a better sense of the human environment in which the events occurred. But we should not be happy if these tendencies led anybody to suppose that the main thing about the Reformation was not a revolt against medieval Catholicism as a bad form of Christianity. So we shall need the help of theologians to explain to us what the difference between medieval and Reformation theology was. And we can expect (ongoingly) to get that help because theologians are more concerned than they used to be with the historical or "social" context of medieval or Reformation theology. Well, something (a dispute between the authors?) seems to have happened between the beginning of the paragraph and the end: it starts by approving the reading of the theological positions in a historical and "social" context, and ends by holding that this particular theological position should not really be put in a historical or social context at all. It seems that the pressure for the statement did not come from within the argument, but from an urgent desire of the authors, or one of them, to make it at this climactic point.

A few pages earlier, they (or he) had wanted to say something similar. They state their faith in the Reformation as a permanent contribution to the vitality of Western tradition, the contribution being to bring, in a matter of ultimate concern, popular thought and feeling on to the stage of history.

Never limited to saints or intellectuals, the Reformation has been a historical experience shared . . . by millions of men and women. For good or ill, it

duced countless humble people to think for themselves . . . in the end many let others think for them, but . . .

"Many" must in the first place mean Catholics, though I imagine it also means Anglicans or Lutherans (or anybody) who after the initial excitement fell back into conformity with the views of their superiors. The Catholics must have been behaving in this way during the centuries of hierarchical manipulation when they were subject to the "religious and philosophical values which had been imposed on [them] by manipulators" from Hildebrand to Aquinas. They would go on in the same way while their Church "anaesthetized Italy [and] lost what remained of its influence on the glittering urban culture of France", recruited a few "neo-Romanics" and "other refugees from nineteenth-century individualism and industrialism" and staggered through 1870 towards the modern world. No, the first reaction was the right one: the authors (or one of them) are not keen on Catholicism.

This distaste is particularly noticeable since those whom one might have presumed another victim of their judgment, the Marxists, get a distinctly sympathetic hearing throughout the book. I would not have supposed it possible for an honest person to regard Friedrich Engels as a more interesting historian of the Reformation than the bigoted but hard-working Catholic Johannes Janssen, but this is obviously the authors' view. They find Engels's exposition of the class struggle in Reformation Germany (which was mainly a piece of journalism about the revolution of 1848) "gripping", and some later thoughts of his about the general relation between economic and other factors in history "sensitive and subtle". His identification of Catholicism as a sort of ideological feudalism is passed without comment, and I think we are to assume that they agree with it; personally I find it a ball and chain round the legs of early modern history.

Their report on the tradition of Marxist historiography of the Reformation, in Germany from Karl Kautsky to the DDR, in England through Belfort Bax and Roy Pascal to early Robert Scribner, is one of the most valuable things in the book, and displays on a broader front the comradeship which was already evident in Dickens's work *The German Nation and Martin Luther* (1974). Pascal's intelligent and knowing study, *The Social Basis of the German Reformation* (1934), which said that Luther was the man of the petty bourgeoisie, and would no doubt have been put out by the Left Book Club if that had been



A detail of Cornelis Floris's engraving, published in 1548, of an ornamental cup, similar to one in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection; reproduced from the catalogue European Silver in the series on that collection, by Hamelore Müller (312pp. Sotheby. £57.50. 0856673137).

In existence (it was actually published by the Rationalist Press), is commended as "a valuable corrective to studies of the Reformation which . . . gave insufficient recognition to the social elements in historical change". While I respect Pascal's bunk, I think this is too kind. By comparison with, say, Günther Franz's *Deutsche Bauernkrieg* (1933-4), it is not much more than chic polemic, and Dickens and Tonkin, while they very properly call for a translation of Franz's classic, do not otherwise consider its significance. Since they have just given us three or four pages about Engels on the same subject, this must mean something. What I think it means is that if you believe "social" means "class struggle", you can be relied upon to have less truck with priestcraft than a National Socialist like Franz, or representatives of Federal German scholarship like Bernd Moeller or Heiko Oberman. Less, too, than Dutch historians such as Geyl or Enno van Gelder, who wrote up the element of *coup d'état* in the emergence of a Protestant Netherlands, and doubted whether there was much popular contribution to it at all. The one case of this kind of thing which Dickens and Tonkin mention is that of Lyon in France; but their description of it as a forcible reimposition of Catholicism on a city which had voluntarily adopted the Reformation is surely the contrary of the truth.

They are, of course, absolutely entitled to their point of view, which is defensible, and

rather a breath of fresh air in an atmosphere often turned stale by excessive ecumenism. As a guide to the future of Reformation history, I think they will be found misleading. As guides in the past, which is after all their province, they are learned, pretty exhaustive and, considering the frame of mind, impartial. The first part of the book, which deals with the sixteenth century, is harder going than the second. You have to dig the early historians out of a printed intellectual history of sixteenth-century Europe, and it is hard to tell whether they are worth reading, except in so far as (like Foxe) they are primary sources themselves. After 1600 the background is allowed to recede, and Sarpi, Strype, Mosheim, Robertson, Guizot and Ranke emerge as authors we can place and ought to read. We clearly ought to read Ranke first: in this carefully drawn perspective he stands head and shoulders above everyone else, quite evidently the father of the modern historiography of the German Reformation, as of many other things. The third part, from Ranke to the present, is fun when tracing the emergence of a "social" history of the Reformation; rather a card-index otherwise.

Altogether *The Reformation in Historical Thought* is a blessing, though a mixed one. Its principal use, I consider, will be to tell a perceptive reader whom he should read and whom he need not bother with. Its principal drawback is to tell you about historians of the Reformation without really telling you anything about the Reformation itself. It does not do that because it never shows you a historian working at an actual, particular problem; even in a work of this scope, there ought to have been some room for this. Without it, as Herbert Butterfield might have advised the authors if they had been able to consult him, the history of historical thought can never be much more than a catalogue.

There is not much close working in Rosemary O'Day's book, *The Debate on the English Reformation*, either, but it is something more than a provincial appendix to Dickens and Tonkin. It gives longer quotations; it has jokes (some good, some bad); it is a good deal more interesting on early nineteenth-century Catholics like Liogard, and on the influence of Cobbett's *History of the Protestant Reformation*; it made me want to read Hopkins's friend Canon Dixon. As a manual for history students it will be very handy. Some of O'Day's colleagues will blanch when she tells them that "no historian worth his or her salt would quote a document from a secondary source without checking its accuracy against the original".

## Scanning the local scene

### D. M. Palliser

**M. W. BERESFORD**  
*Time and Place: Collected essays*  
 406pp. Hambledon. £24.  
 0907628397  
**ALAN EVERITT**  
*Landscape and Community in England*  
 362pp. Hambledon. £22.  
 0907628427

Local history and landscape history have come of age in the past forty years. Previously, the first was regarded by many professional historians as simply a hobby for amateurs, while the second did not exist as a serious study at all. Now, although amateurs still rightly play a large part in both, there has been an enormous growth in their teaching and writing by professionals, above all by W. G. Hoskins, H. P. R. Finberg and the "Leicester school". The Department of English Local History at Leicester University was founded in 1948 with Hoskins in charge. His first successor, Finberg, laid it down in 1952 that "the business of the local historian" was to delineate "the Origin, Growth, Decline, and Fall of a Local Community". This does not mean, as is sometimes argued, that the "Leicester school" has no interest in the broader horizons of region or nation, but that the locality comes first, and that the local historian usually works from microcosm to macrocosm. The point is well illustrated by these welcome reprints of collected essays by two other masters of the field.

M. W. Beresford began writing shortly after Hoskins; the two earliest pieces in *Time and Place* date from 1940, when he was still an undergraduate; and he and Hoskins were working in parallel on Midland deserted villages in the 1940s. His is not the Leicester approach to the subject. Indeed, his interesting autobiographical preface to *Time and Place* sees his earliest work as demonstrating how "an aspect of local history took its proper place as servant of general history", and only about half the twenty-five pieces reprinted here can strictly be called local.

Beresford has been enormously productive: in addition to other articles not included, he has published six books singly or in collaboration, all of them major contributions to knowledge, whether on the medieval landscape, medieval towns, or deserted medieval villages. The last six pieces in *Time and Place* reflect a shift to yet another interest, the modern history of Leeds, on which a seventh book is promised. If he has a fault it is perhaps a superabundance of categorization and examples; he confesses disingenuously to being "more of a scanner than a scholar by temperament", and there are problems with attempting exhaustive, standardized lists of boroughs or deserted villages. This is inevitable; however, when one is tackling large questions which earlier scholars had shirked or ignored; and in compensation Beresford has a magnificent visual side, using buildings and landscape as fluently as books and documents.

Alan Everitt, in contrast, succeeded Hoskins in the Chair of English Local History at

Leicester, and his work has a slightly different emphasis. In the new Introduction to *Landscape and Community in England*, he suggests that although localities should be studied "not simply for their own sake, but for the light they shed on English society as a whole", nevertheless "we need to pay greater attention than we have done . . . to the indigenous life of the local communities of England, and to the fact that it stemmed ultimately from different roots from that of the community of the realm". He amply justifies the point in twelve papers which display subtlety, originality and an acute awareness of regional and local differences; and a recent lecture printed here for the first time, "Dynasty, and community since the seventeenth century", is superb. Much of the emphasis is on Kent, where the demonstration of local differences of landscape and society is masterly; it whets the appetite for Everett's long-awaited book on the evolution of Kentish settlement.

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## Preaching in print

### Alastair Hamilton

**PAUL A. RUSSELL**  
*Lay Theology in the Reformation: Popular pamphleteers in southwest Germany 1521-1525*  
 287pp. Cambridge University Press. £27.50.  
 0 521 30727 9

When Erasmus expressed the hope that the Scriptures should be read by "every shoemaker, day labourer, weaver and farmer" he did so in Latin, a language of which, as he well knew, the average working man was entirely ignorant. He was nevertheless sincere in wishing to educate the laity and his aspirations were shared by the first Reformers, Luther and Zwingli. When it came to conceding to laymen an active role in the Church, however, the Reformers were more hesitant. Despite the idea of the priesthood of all believers, and his own translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular, Luther always sustained the supremacy of the clergy over the laity, and after the Peasant Revolt of 1525, he was manifestly opposed to an active lay apostolate. Zwingli was more cautious after 1525, but he had allowed the laity a greater share in church organization and, above all, he had encouraged laymen to avail themselves of the recently invented printing press and to express their views in books and pamphlets.

Pamphlets duly appeared in their hundreds, and increasingly historians now are endeavouring to establish whether the authors represent

any particular class and whether the pamphlets entitle us to draw any social or political conclusions. To what extent were the pamphleteers influenced by the Reformers and how far were they advancing traditional religious views? What was their opinion of those humanists and churchmen favourably inclined to the kind of literature they were producing?

In *Lay Theology in the Reformation* Paul A. Russell analyses the writings of eight pamphleteers (five men and three women) active in south-west Germany between 1521 and 1525. The writers he has chosen are not typical of any one class or trade. Argula von Grumbach, remarkable as a female pamphleteer, was a member of the nobility. Haug Morschalck was a soldier. Hans Sachs, although indeed a shoemaker, was so successful as a song-writer as to be notorious exceptional in respect of his craft. The pamphleteers can be considered representative only of the relatively uneducated laity, because they were literate but appear to have known no Latin.

If the diversity of the subjects makes one sceptical about any social conclusions, they remain interesting theologically none the less. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the pamphleteers is their attitude to the Reformation. Not one can be regarded as a true Lutheran. They all insist on the necessity of reading the Scriptures and they all indulge in predictable criticisms of the Church of Rome, but hardly any of them have a strictly Lutheran view of justification by faith. A pamphleteer like Sebastian Lotzer, a furrier, from Memmingen, clearly believed that works could

be meritorious. The Augsburg weaver Utz Rychssner was also more in the tradition of Erasmus. Argula von Grumbach insisted that she was not Lutheran, and both Hans Sachs and the painter Hans Greiffenberger doubted the sufficiency of Luther's reform. The pamphleteers were inspired, rather, by the conviction of the imminent end of the world, and the attendant quest for reformers capable of providing the necessary guidance to prepare for it. Although they appreciated the efforts of Luther, Zwingli and Erasmus, they never ranked them above their own local preachers. One of Russell's most valid conclusions concerns the local character of the early Reformation and the comparative indifference of laymen to the distant leaders of a movement which they never regarded as particularly new, let alone revolutionary. Far more than on the doctrine of the Reformers, as Russell rightly points out, the pamphleteers drew on medieval traditions of mysticism and affective piety transmitted by the mendicant preachers, and on the *Devoio Moderna*.

Russell makes a number of good points and his study contributes to an assessment of the early Reformation and the understanding of subsequent developments. Unfortunately, however, too much of his book is taken up by ponderous summaries of the theories of other scholars, digressions on economic and social history, and overfluous diagrams and illustrations. An infelicitous style (which could have been mitigated by editing) and certain repeated slips, like the failure to distinguish between monks and friars, come as a disappointment







## Wringing the last drop

Peter Blake

ROGER J. GREEN  
The Lengthening Shadow  
215pp. Oxford University Press. £7.95.  
0 19 271509 7

Roger J. Green deals in the traditional parable of ghost stories. The setting for his first book, *The Fear of Samuel Walton*, is rural Derbyshire in 1883. The source of malignancy is a stone, which is looking for blood. Young Samuel Walton senses the evil in the stone, and he understands its manifestations in natural events and accidents. He is nearly drowned down an old mine, he is washed off a bridge that collapses in a storm, his father breaks his leg, and finally his uncle Edgar is killed. All these things are the fault of the stone, yet no one will listen to Sam. Only Mellor, the school bully, shows any understanding of the stone, but he is so chastened by nearly drowning in the mine that he shrinks from hillying and from Sam. Eventually, Sam reads "Old Throbbelpenny's" book and learns that "When a thousand years hath passed in 1883, the Stone will take three human lives". Although this report has no provenance and offers no reason for the stone's behaviour, it is surprisingly precise in offering a deadline: "The stone will take these lives on Midsummer Day 1883, if not before", though an alternative is offered: "If [the stone] hath not moved and not killed and taken its blood before Midsummer then it will wait ... [until] that time men call Hallow Mass". Green ends the first book at Midsummer, by which time, because of the stone's escape-clause, nothing has been resolved.

Because the first book ends inconclusively, Green is free to carry the story into the sequel, *The Lengthening Shadow*, which follows the stone up to Hallowmas. Not much has changed. A few things have regressed to allow the tale to be told again: Mellor has reverted to being a bully so that he can again be frightened into submission; Sam seems to have forgotten reading Throbbelpenny's book, remembering only a story he'd "heard about earlier in the year", so he has to read it all again in someone else's book; his father's broken leg has healed so that this time round he can cut it on a scythe. The road bridge may not have been repaired, so this time Sam is washed off the railway

bridge; and once again Sam nearly drowns.

"Yet nobody wanted to listen to him" runs the refrain, but by now, well into the second book, one isn't surprised. The ingredients of a reasonable short story have been spread out over two books, and the sleight of hand is cruelly exposed, as if a magician had worked a trick twice. The master of ghostly legend, M. R. James, would never have offered the audience such a second glimpse.

Long after the sequel has fallen as flat as its predecessor, and our interest has been uprooted like the stone, the story has been with words as startling and as chilling as any that have gone before: "You can read how [a rich and powerful man] used the Stone for his dark purposes in the next book ..."



A detail from an illustration by an uncredited artist for "The Travelling Musicians" from A Treasury of Fairy Tales, retold by Michael Foss (160pp, Michael O'Mara, £8.95, 0 948397306).

## False fangs

Gerald Mangan

MIRANDA SEYMOUR  
The Vampire of Verdonia  
100pp. Deutsch. £5.95.  
0 233 97867 4  
FRIEDA HUGHES  
Getting Rid of Edna  
93pp. Heinemann. £6.50.  
0 434 94350 9

In both of these books the households are dominated by that stock figure of English comedy, the insufferable aunt on an interminable visit. There is a trio of them in *The Vampire of Verdonia*, all cruel and vain and greedy enough to exasperate its saintly young heroine, and inspire vague dreams of revenge. Sarah Jane is the best-behaved girl in Verdonia, and doesn't quite know how to be naughty; but when the king summons her to the palace to receive a special medal, she readily succumbs to the influence of his rather spoiled daughter, Louisa. Once the princess has whispered a few ideas in her ear, it isn't long before the aunts are finding luminous paint in their toothpaste, and hair-brushes turning to hedgehogs.

Sarah Jane is soon notorious for her practical jokes, and unpopular all over town. When she starts terrorizing old ladies with a set of false vampire-teeth, her new reputation reaches its nadir; but she meets her match, and her come-uppance, when Louisa dares her to brandish her fangs in the house of the local witch. In the book's most memorable image, wittily illustrated by Alicia Garcia de Llanos, the girl-vampire and her long-suffering cat Rumbold are whisked away in a cupboard to the castle of Dracula. The Count is feeble with age, but seriously undarnourished; and it is only a

cacophonous serenade from Rumbold that saves her from a sticky end as an unwilling blood-donor.

Miranda Seymour works this comic-horror vein with some confidence, but her rather garulous style is often a touch ingratiating ("No man wanted to be married to a cross ugly old woman who ate buttered toast all day and hit him on the head with a walking-stick. Well, would you? ...") and real laughs are as thin on the ground as real shivers. But Sarah Jane is an amiable turncoat, and her adventure is wound up satisfactorily, without making too obvious a moral.

*Getting Rid of Edna* is a more episodic affair, and shorter on narrative logic. Miranda is a normal girl who lives with her Aunt Agatha, a motherly witch whose awful sister Edna creates domestic chaos by casting whimsical spells all over the house. Carnivorous dandelions, talking bats and unwanted ski-slopes appear and disappear at random, and a trick with mirrors succeeds in turning Edna permanently into a donkey. But it fails to get rid of her, and Miranda begins to despair of restoring any semblance of order.

Frieda Hughes edifies up with some inventive creations: an amphibious cat with a fish-tail, a misrapiat cat with a whole reference library in its pockets, an endearingly lachrymose rodent called a grimster, and so on. The problem is that her own taste for whimsy so far exceeds Edna's, that the reader's impatience eventually exceeds Miranda's. Towards the end, when the vicar drops in unexpectedly on a mad family tea-party, the note of normality comes as a relief in the midst of the unremitting zaniness, but the comic tension fizzles out too easily. Most of it is too ridiculous to be very amusing, and the surfeit of magic spells precludes any real sense of magic.

## Imperialimps

Anthony Horowitz

JOHN CHRISTOPHER  
Dragon Dance  
127pp. Viking Kestrel. £6.95.  
0 670 81030 4

With *Dragon Dance*, John Christopher completes a trilogy that has packed enough action and incident into its three slim volumes to fill a mobile library. It began with *Fireball*, in which an English teenager, Simon, and his American cousin, Brad, stumbled into a strange parallel world where the Roman empire had survived (with surprisingly little technological advance) to the twentieth century. Once there, they ad-

vanced from slave and gladiator to leaders of Christian revolution. By "inventing" the stirrup and the longbow, they oversaw the destruction of the empire, only to fall victim to a regime crueler than the one it replaced.

They then sailed to America where, in the second volume, *New Found Land*, they encountered Algonquian Indians, Vikings and finally Aztecs. They fled again, only to be captured by slavers en route to China. And that is where the third volume begins. The mix is similar. There is an Emperor to overthrow, a girl to beguile, battles to be fought and yet another culture to assimilate. This time the boys introduce the tank and the aeroplane. They just have to taste the bitter fruits of their harvest before they're on the move again.

John Christopher has almost made the trilogy his trademark (this is his third). Yet strangely he ignores the potential of serial development. There are no resonances. Brad and Simon remain what they were when they set out, the former something of a know-all, the latter tetchy and envious. Despite their hardships and betrayals, triumphs and disasters, there is no sense of bonding. Friends that they lose along the way (a Roman centurion who dies for them, for example) hardly merit a second mention. And apart from their astonishing grasp of languages – Latin, Algonquian, Viking, Chinese – the boys learn next to nothing. Simon and Brad pass through three continents almost as blithely as tourists on a coach tour, only their presence is frequently more destructive.

These are books designed for a television audience, operating in a manner similar to the BBC's version of *Tripods*. Situations are set up, played out and then forgotten as the characters move on to the next week's episode.

What the books do have is a broad base of knowledge of ancient civilizations and warfare, which makes them credible. They also have pace, excitement, lively and economic descriptions and plenty of cliffhanging chapter endings. In this respect *Dragon Dance* is perhaps the least satisfying of the three – it can be read on its own, but is better approached as the conclusion of a trilogy – principally because the author gets bogged down in a complicated "two mind" theology that eventually dominates the action.

## Fantasy and the family

Sarah Hayes

MARGARET MAHY  
The Tricksters  
266pp. Dent. £7.95.  
0 460 06203 4

Like the tricksters in her new novel, Margaret Mahy can charm with illusions and verbal trickery. At the end of the story, she seems to have got the better of the reader, who is forced to go back to the beginning to pick up all the clues she painstakingly laid down and he carelessly failed to see.

The exercise is no exciting one. In the now familiar Mahy mode, the framework of the novel is solid and real. A large family arrive at their ancestral holiday house to spend Christmas there. Carnival's Hide was built ninety years ago by Edward Carnival who became a recluse after his wife died bearing their third child. Years later his son Teddy died too, drowned in a diving accident. Like all the Hamilton children, Ariadne (known as Harry) is fascinated by the ghostly Teddy. She writes about him (and unconsciously about her developing sexuality) in a secret romantic fantasy. Harry is seventeen and more of a watcher than Christobel, her extrovert elder sister. But it is Harry, not Christobel, who first encounters the Carnival brothers, three travelling conjurers who have come from England to discover their ancestral home. The rest of the Hamilton family accept the odd quirks of the brothers' (their identical scars, their uncanny knowledge of Carnival's Hide, their ability to take over other people, even their names – Ovid, Hadfield and Felix. Only Harry is wary, suspecting that they are a creation of her own imagination.

As the traditional New Zealand Christmas festivities proceed, cracks begin to appear in the Hamilton ménage. Harry's parents, Jack and Naomi, are struggling with their marriage. Christobel's long relationship with dependable Robert is foundering. Emma, an adopted Hamilton, is learning how to cope with single parenthood. Only the little ones, including Emma's two-year-old daughter Tibby, seem wholly content to be enjoying the run-up to Christmas.

A slight earthquake and a fight at a fancy-dress beach party cause more uneasiness and confusion. Then illumination comes in a series of revelations which strike different members of the family like lightning. Emma's daughter is revealed to be the child of middle-aged Jack, adored father of the Hamilton tribe. The three Carnivals, one charming, one violent and one compassionate, combine to create the ghost of Teddy Carnival who was not drowned but murdered with a spade by his tormented father. And quiet Anthony Hesketh turns out to be a descendant of Teddy's sister Minerva. He is the only one able to quieten the unhappy Carnival ghosts.

The ability to combine a dazzling fantasy with painfully real emotions is a particular gift. But Margaret Mahy has something more to offer: the solidity of a robust and affectionate family, with its shared language, its traditional squabbles, accepted rivalries and secrets. She writes, as always, in a style which teeters on the brink of too abyss of her own invention. *Wintersy* is just a step away. In scope, scale and the sophistication of its subject matter. The tricksters is her most ambitious novel yet. However, the compulsion to go back to the beginning to look at what occurs in the light of what is ultimately revealed, is not always a desirable feature.

## Sales of books and manuscripts

H. R. Woudhuysen

Sotheby's English Literature and History Summer sale on July 10 and 11 (see TLS July 3) had some mixed results. The total realized by the sale came to just under £800,000, but nearly 14 per cent of items were unsold. Among these were the death mask of John Keats, Oscar Wilde's only known watercolour, the manuscript of his unpublished poem "Heart's Yearnings", the photographs of Wilde taken outside the Royal Palace in Naples possibly by Lord Alfred Douglas, an inscribed copy of the fourth edition of *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* and, later in the sale, sheets of the "second" edition of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* marked up for the "third" edition, quite a few of the Sassoon items and the autograph manuscript of Thomas Paine's letter to Camille Jourdan about organized religion.

Some of the items which found buyers did reasonably well, although there were not many surprises. But among these was the previously recorded manuscript of Sir Thomas More's *Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* which fetched £42,000 to Hoffman and Freeman (estimate £25,000–£28,000); Fletcher paid £6,000 for Esther Inglis's calligraphic manuscript of the quatrains of Gui du four, Seigneur de Pibrac, which had been expected to fetch £1,500 at most. Shaw was much in demand with the two best lots, the working papers of *Common Sense about the War* and the album containing his last work, the manuscript and photographs of his rhyming guide to Ayot St Lawrence, both going to Dupre for £22,000 and £15,000 against estimates of £12,000–£15,000 and £6,000–£8,000 respectively. The single letter written by Churchill during the Boer War as a press correspondent and prisoner of war was keenly sought after and went as high as £10,000 (estimate £4,000–£6,000).

The collection of material relating to *When We Were Very Young* went to Prince for its lowest estimate of £120,000. This came from the Carl H. Pforzheimer Library. New homes in institutional libraries were found for several of the most important lots. Quaritch secured the huge archive of the late seventeenth-century Presion papers for the British Library, paying

only £80,000 against a pre-sale estimate of £100,000–£120,000. The National Library of Wales bought the very attractive proof of Christopher Saxton's map of Wales, c1580, hand-coloured with some manuscript additions, for its higher estimate of £60,000 and Salisbury Cathedral Library added to its Isaac Walton collection by paying £3,000 for a volume of twelve mainly theological tracts of the early seventeenth century which had once belonged to the author of *The Compleat Angler*.

On the whole, the results for the sale's magnificent Oscar Wilde material were a little disappointing. Some of the best items failed to find buyers, and others went for prices nearer the lower than the higher end of their estimates. Hartnoll paid £16,000 for the manuscript of the poem "The Harlot's House" (estimate £18,000–£22,000), and the best published letter in this part of the sale, written by Wilde to Blacker shortly after his release from Reading Gaol, went for its lower estimate of £20,000 to Willer; Prince bought the working typescript of *De Profundis* for £6,500 (estimate £6,000–£8,000). The items which proved most attractive

were surprisingly those which were not by Wilde, but only related to him. Prince again paid £4,500 for a copy of Shaw's letter to Frank Harris about his biography of Wilde (estimate £1,500–£2,000) and Maguire bought two lots of largely unpublished letters and papers by Mrs Constance Wilde and her family for £7,500 and £3,000, well above what they were expected to fetch – £2,500–£3,000 and £1,000–£1,200.

The single letter describing the burning down of the Globe Theatre went to Fleming for £14,000, just below its lower pre-sale estimate of £15,000, but still a remarkable price for such a document. Viscount Eccles paid £3,200 for Johnson's unpublished letter to William Bowles (estimate £2,500–£3,500), and a similarly unpublished letter from Sterne to Richard Chapman proved to have been somewhat undervalued before the sale at £400–£450: in the event Quaritch bought it for £1,100. Even so, this was only half the amount Joseph was prepared to pay for a fine letter from James Thomson to his patron George Lyttelton which had been estimated to go for as much as £3,000. None of these prices include the buyer's premium.

## Relevant reformatting

David Vaisey

MICHAEL COOK  
The Management of Information from Archives  
234pp. Aldershot: Gower. £19.50.  
0 566 03504 9

Michael Cook, the Archivist of Liverpool University, has given us a useful book in *The Management of Information from Archives*. It does not say a lot that is new, but that is not its intention. For some while now Cook has been leading a group of people producing a Manual of Archival Description – a work referred to throughout the present book, rather bravely, as M.A.D. In its research the team has had under review a considerable body of international literature on the administration of archives, which is here digested so that this book

will form a companion volume for M.A.D. Since much the best work on archive practice has in recent years been produced in America, and is not always easily obtainable in Britain, it is extremely convenient to have it summarized thus, accompanied as it is by a sizeable bibliography on all aspects of archive management except conservation.

The author and publishers claim that what is new is the book's standpoint. The usual British position is that archives are part of the historical heritage, but here it is held that the archivist is simply another kind of information scientist – an "information professional". "At the present day," says Cook, "a reasonable view must be that the best place for the national archives is probably with the other information service." There is, indeed, much to be said for this view, and, drawing on the work of the Archival Description Project, Cook leads his readers gently into the application to archives of the theory and practice of computer-based information retrieval systems, having first taken them through the familiar, and traditional territories of the acquisition of archives, their appraisal, their arrangement and their description.

Like most works in such fields it is a little inclined to lapse into ugly and unnecessary jargon. Words and phrases such as "outreach", "necessary infrastructural [sic] work" and "informational values" appear too frequently, and from time to time meaningless sentences creep in such as "The Strathclyde Record Office is the largest of its kind in Scotland, and compares in size and facilities with any comparable office". Overall, however, this is a book to be welcomed by the professional archivist and records manager since, to use one of its own words, it "reformats" much that has been written from the viewpoint of systems in other countries so as to have reference to the British scene, and makes computer-based information retrieval both palatable and relevant to archivists.

We apologize for three printing errors in Bernard Wasserstein's article, "Whose history is it, anyway?", published in last week's TLS. Column 4, line 19 should have read: "papers: prison riots, preventive measures and"; in the same column, line 22, "Sin" should have read "Sinn" ("[sic]" is the following line referring only to the spelling "Feinners"); and line 11 of the next paragraph should have read "files similarly barred suggests their general".

In Rudolf Arnheim's review of W. J. T. Mitchell's *Iconology: Image, text, ideology*, in the TLS of June 27, column 4, lines 17–23 should have read: "The direct perceptual evidence of a work's spatiality or temporality is at the very core of the media, whose primary impact cannot be argued away by references to indirect representation or composite works. Nor can it be any justification for enlisting Lessing in the ranks of the iconophobes."

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